

**Do We Need Literary Texts in Language Classroom?
An Investigation on Students' Perceptions**

Thesis

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this thesis is a presentation of my original research work. Wherever contributions of others are involved, every effort is made to indicate this clearly, with due reference to the literature, and acknowledgement of collaborative research and discussions.



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ABSTRACT

In Bangladeshi English language teaching situation, literary texts are not highly valued. There are several misconceptions regarding the use of literary texts to teach language and this paper has examined this issue from students' perspective. The participants of this study were mixed ability tertiary level students who were attending a general English course. The aim of the study is to introduce literary texts in the upper levels both Secondary and Higher Secondary English language learning. In this regard, students' responses were collected through questionnaires and individual interviews. Special attention was given to comparing the views of the similar type of questions found in both questionnaire and interview. The usefulness of using literary texts from students' perception was carefully scrutinized to obtain a reliable and comprehensive result. From the findings, it was evident that students generally enjoyed the lessons. It was also found that students considered literary texts as the best source to learn vocabulary and language in use. Some of them found non-literary texts more motivating as it would help them in other subjects. However, the majority of the students indicated that interest was more powerful than usefulness in effecting their motivation to reading short stories. Finally, students were quite positive about the literary texts. It is hoped that the findings could shed some light on what English teachers and material developers should consider while selecting and designing activity around a literary texts to make a language class interactive and enjoyable to the learners.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

“You may ask what is the use of studying the world of imagination where anything is possible and anything can be assumed, where there are no rights or wrongs and all arguments are equally good.”

Northrop Frye (1964, cited in McKay, 1982)

This is how most people regard literature in general, and this is also what they feel about the use of literature in the language classroom. This paper, however, examines students' perception about bringing back literary texts in the language classroom.

1.1. Background of the English language teaching situation in Bangladesh:

In this 21st century the world is experiencing the process of Globalization and it is changing radically. In this process, English language has become a valuable commodity and a major challenge to sustain in this competitive world. Hence, learning English language has turned out to be a global need. To fulfill this global need, English Language Teaching (ELT) experts all around the world are engaged in inventing effective new methods to teach English. It is indispensable to equip the next-generation to cope with this challenge and Bangladesh Government has given top priority to this issue. Education Ministry of Bangladesh has revised its English language curriculum several times after the independence and over the years it has taken a new shape. The latest alteration in this sector is the adoption of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach, the most popular one of recent time to teach English language around the world, replacing the traditional Grammar Translation method. It was envisaged that CLT would develop

learners, 'communicative competence' and thereby strengthen the human resource development efforts of the Government of Bangladesh (NCTB, 2003, cited in Hamid, 2008). Consequently, English curriculum has been changed from before incorporating new methods and materials. Literature, once played a prominent role in English curriculum, has been excluded from English as Second Language programs (ESL) in our country since there was a lack of consistent and suitable methodology to teach literature in the language class.

Previously, the whole English syllabus was divided into two parts; the first part completely focused on English literature and the second part contained only English grammar. Though literature was in the first part, there was no connection with language teaching. The textbooks contained literary pieces like- short stories, poetry, drama where language was not taught through those texts. It was a traditional literature teaching where students were asked to answer some set questions (i.e. short question, broad question, explanation, short notes) that required a lot of memorization. It was not at all an interactive classroom and teachers were the only resource to explain the text. In that period, most literature based English classes were often consisted of passive students as Long describes, '*too busy writing in translations of unfamiliar words to respond to the text*'. (1986:42, cited in Zafeiriadou, 2001). Since I was a student of that period, my experience matched with Long's assertion. We used to memorize some set questions from each text and were never involved in critical thinking about any particular text. Our personal opinions were never counted. From that experience, students had developed apathy towards literature, which still prevails, eventually leading to poor performance in

English. It was a serious concern of the Government of Bangladesh to improve the level of English proficiency in all educational levels. As a result, the English Language Teaching Improvement Project (ELTIP) has been launched in 1997, which was a breakthrough in two senses. Firstly, it recognized the need for a coherent institutional structure of ELT in Bangladesh, which was not present before. Secondly, the ELTIP has helped the promotion of CLT (Yasmin, 2006). Based on this new approach of English teaching, the English curriculum of Secondary and Higher Secondary levels have been changed and in this recent trend 'Literature' has lost its value over time. Though the underlying purpose of teaching literary text in the previous time was to teach language it was never followed. Educators and experts at that time felt that literature was not an effective tool to teach English language anymore and in reaction to that they discarded long literary pieces from the previous curriculum and included few poems and excerpts of short story in the latest textbook (*English for Today*) in secondary and higher secondary levels that has marked a negative impact on learners' overall language development. Yasmin (2006) has identified this change and listed it as a major challenge of ELT in Bangladesh that is the lack of sufficient awareness amongst the teachers about the significant differences between language and literature teaching. She further adds, "The majority of educators, policy makers and English language teachers in Bangladesh have inadequate knowledge about this differences and this has resulted in a complicated situation of Bangladeshi English language teaching." (Yasmin, 2006, p.138)

1.2. Purpose of the study:

To cater to the communicative need of the learners, the new textbooks that are designed based on CLT, have included informative, structured passages and very few literary texts (mainly poems and excerpts of short story) to develop language skills. The researcher has read the objectives of those lessons containing literary texts and found that it still demands literary appreciation and no interactive activities are designed around those texts. She has also read comprehension passages and found that those texts are very short, refined and to some extent mechanical. Grammar can be taught through those texts but are not sufficient enough to develop students' imagination, reading skill, critical thinking ability and vocabulary. This is a growing concern that when students join university level they fail to show their expected competency in English. To fill this gap we can bring back *Literature* in language class where learners will get a good exposure to the English language, which will not only be limited to functional needs but also it will develop students' thinking capacity. In the previous curriculum, the basic problem was literary texts were not used to teach language as the researcher mentioned before. Presently, very few people actually do extensive reading and without reading it is impossible to learn the usage of the language, its structure, and also the vocabulary. Students generally perform a passive role in the language class and do not invest much time on imagination and critical thinking which has inspired the researcher to work on bringing back literature in language classroom. If we can use interesting as well as thought provoking literary texts in the language classroom, students will get a chance to explore themselves and there will be a holistic language development. In this regard, it is necessary to investigate students' attitude towards literature regarding the effectiveness of

using it in the language classroom to make them strong and confident bilinguals. There are many different forms of literature. One of them is short story through which we can develop our reading skill and that will be the prime focus of the present study.

The present study investigated the perception of 50 tertiary level ESL learners towards the use of literature (particularly short stories) in language classroom, to determine whether we should incorporate literature in the upper levels of education, both Higher Secondary and Tertiary. In doing so the researcher has formulated five hypotheses to obtain a clear idea about students' perception on this issue that are stated below:

- Literary texts are a good source to enrich vocabulary.
- Literary texts will improve reading comprehension.
- Literary texts motivate learners to actively read and participate in class.
- Literary texts develop learners' creativity and imagination.
- Literary texts leave room for overall language development

In the next subsequent chapters, the literature on this topic is reviewed, research methods used in this study is discussed in detail and the results of the study are presented followed by a discussion where the above mentioned hypotheses are tested to see whether students want literary texts in their language classroom or not.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter begins with the context of teaching literature followed by a review of the literature about the benefits of using literature in a language classroom. Then the difference between the uses of literary and non-literary texts has been discussed with special focus on the use of short story. This was followed by the arguments against using literature along with justification of using literature in the language class.

2.1 The ESL context of teaching literature:

The issue of teaching English literature in a non-native context dates back to the early years of the last century when literature was considered to be of high prestige in language study. However, in the Bangladeshi educational context, teaching English Literature in language class was not highly popular. Generally in our context, literature meant studying canonical writers like Shakespeare, Dickens and classical texts like *Hamlet*, *King Lear*, *The Tale of Two Cities* etc. The common assumption of literature teaching is concerned exclusively with 'study of literature' so that students are expected to make critical observations about literary works, on the supposition that they have already learned how to read them (Widdowson: 1985). This is a misconception of teaching language through literature, and for this reason many teachers and students have apathy towards literature as it demands a good grip over language, which our students lack. Consequently, they find fiction is difficult to read as language itself turns into a

barrier, and they cannot acquire language through literature. Linda Gajdusek (1988)

comments:

“Many ESL teachers either consciously or unconsciously feel that "literature is too 'hard' for ESL students." Given the large number of language-teaching problems that they have to face, many do not bother to ask themselves why they feel this way; there seem to be more practical things to worry about.” (p. 227, 228)

In most cases, teachers do not examine the problem of the students and eventually they fail to discover the exciting communicative potential that a literary text can offer. After the advent of CLT approach, literature has been almost discarded from the reading material and one of the major reasons is teachers' failure to identify the benefits.

In the past two decades or so, literature has found its way back into the ESL teaching all over the world. Instructors have realized that literature can be used to reinforce skills and complement language teaching, which coincides with the researcher's interest of using literature in language classroom in Bangladeshi context. This chapter will shade light on some issues listed below:

- Why do we need literature?
- How is using literature in language classroom different from other materials?
- Which language skills can be developed?
- What type of literature is suitable for our classroom?
- What are the arguments against using literature?

2.2 Why do we need literature?

If we want to bring back literature in the language classroom, first of all we need to justify, “Why do we need literature?” The objective of learning a second language is to communicate with others in a social setting. Ur (1999) declares that literature involves emotions as well as intellect that may contribute to personal development that is crucial to develop a person’s communicative abilities. Regarding the emotional attachment with the text, Nolan (1990) expressed his view, “Literature makes us feel the plight of people caught up in a particular problem; literature puts us vicariously and emotionally in a situation the characters are struggling with and therefore, helps us to understand the author’s vision of life.” (pg- 12). In this regard, learners will identify authors’ points of view which will help them to unfold their own thinking capacity.

Certainly, literature is a rich source which presents the target language in use. McCarthy (1994) has highlighted ‘literary texts are examples of language in use. They are instances of real communication in real social contexts’. If we accept that literature presents the real communication then we should use it in language class. Ghosn (2002) has recognized this issue and offered rationales for using authentic literature in ESL class. According to him,

- First, authentic literature provides a motivating meaningful context for language learning.
- Second, literature can contribute to language learning. It presents natural language at its finest use and can thus foster vocabulary development in context. It also provides an excellent medium for a top down approach to language teaching.
- Third, literature can promote academic literacy and thinking skills and prepare the learner for the English medium instruction.

- Fourth, literature can function as a change agent: good literature deals with some aspects of the human condition and can thus contribute to the emotional development of the learner, and foster positive interpersonal and intercultural attitudes. (Ghosn ,2002: 173)

From the above discussion it can be assumed that as literary texts contain daily life communication, students will understand the benefit of using it in language classroom. Collie and Slater (1999) have addressed this issue, when they argue “Approach to the teaching of literature is to let the students derive the benefits of communicative and other activities for language improvement within the context of suitable works of literature.” (p.4)

2.2.1. Literary texts are authentic materials that promote whole language development:

Duff and Maley (2004) have justified the use literary texts in language classroom mainly because literary texts offer genuine samples of a very wide range of styles, registers, and text types at many levels of difficulty. Ur (1999) agrees with this opinion and states that teaching literature in language classroom can be very enjoyable as it provides examples of different styles of writing, and representations of various authentic uses of the languages. Like others, Littlewood (1986) believes that literature provides instances of language structure in use, which can form the basis for instruction and practice in the language skills, especially reading comprehension accompanied by a varying amount of grammatical analysis and explanation. For this reason alone literary texts are worthy of consideration. These justifications advocate that literary texts are the authentic material that contains a wide variety of language input, which learners can

relate with their life and respond accordingly, even though the cultural context is different in many cases. They can also learn grammar points from the reading itself, without even realizing. In Bangladeshi national curriculum no literary texts have been incorporated in the English syllabus to foster all these advantages. It would have been beneficial for the students if they could read one or two pieces of literature besides the existing contrived materials. In this way, students would get an exposure to authentic materials having multiple levels of meaning, which they would find more interesting compared to the carefully graded reading passages. Collie and Slater (1999) also support the use of literary texts as reading material. They argued that, "Literature is authentic material. The most work of literature are not fashioned for the specific purpose of teaching a language. Learners are thus exposed to language that is as genuine and distorted as can be managed in the classroom context." (Collie and Slater, 1999: p.3) This authenticity of literary texts familiarizes the students with different form of actual usage of English in a natural environment. In the same line of reasoning Carter and McRae (1996) state that literary texts provide authentic and unsimplified materials, which they believe, they construct experiences or 'content' in a non-trivial way. It gives voice to complexities and subtleties not always present in other types of text.

2.2.2 Literary texts encourage interpretative abilities, imagination and critical thinking:

The salient part of learning a language is to develop interpretative skill, imagination and critical thinking. Duff and Maley (2004) point out the fact that literary texts are, by their very essence, open to multiple interpretation. This ready-made opinion

gap between one individual's interpretation and another's can be utilised for genuine interaction. Carter and McRae (1996) believe that a language based approach can be developed around a literary texts in order to support the development of interpretative and inferencing skills to the students. Ur, (1999) supports this view and states that literary texts encourage empathy, critical and creative thinking and it contributes to raising awareness of different human situations and conflicts. Most importantly, when a novel, play or short story is explored over a period of time, the result is that the reader begins to 'inhabit' the text (Collie and Slater, 1999). A reader is eager to find out what happens as events unfolds; he or she feels closed to certain characters and shares their emotional responses and while doing so, they become critical about the actions of and view points of the characters. Smagorinsky (1990) suggests, "Students should read literature that involves the consideration and integration of a variety of viewpoints and requires students to project consequences and alternative. Literature, therefore, can help students with their cognitive as well as their psychological development." (pg- 12).

2.2.3 Literary texts are motivating:

Lazar (1993) has examined the usefulness of incorporating literature in a language class. To her, literature is a motivating material and it encourages language acquisition.

She argues that:

"Around the world students have fairly limited access to spoken English and written English often takes on primary importance for stimulating language acquisition. Literature may provide a particularly appropriate way of stimulating this acquisition, as it provides meaningful and memorable contexts for processing and interpreting new language. Within the classroom itself, the use of literary texts its often a particularly

successful way of promoting activities where students need to share their feelings and opinion, such as discussion and group work.” (p.15)

Our educational scenario squarely fits in with Lazar’s assertion. In the Secondary and Higher Secondary levels students do not get much access to spoken English and their sole interest is to get a good score in the board examination where only written English is assessed. This does not stimulate learners to read. They need to go through a rigorous process of preparation to get a good score that involves a lot of memorization. The kind of reading comprehensions they practice in class are all carefully graded having limited amount of vocabulary, which do not leave any room for imagination. Eventually, the learning process becomes mechanical. Moreover, students fail to gain a sense of involvement in the learning process, which prevents them from an emotional engagement with the target language and denies them the pleasures of using the language imaginatively and reflectively. They do not get much chance to explore the meaning of any word. In such a situation motivating texts may help mitigate students’ indifference. Literary text is often more interesting than the texts found in textbooks which triggers students imagination. Duff and Maley (2004) agree with the statement. To them literature has a ‘genuine feeling’ that works as a powerful motivator, especially when allied to the fact that literary texts so often touch on themes to which learners can bring a personal response from their own experience. Selected texts, if interesting to students, can motivate them to read additional literature, thus increasing their reading proficiency (McKay 1986).

To attain success in the overall learning process, the selection of appropriate short story is a crucial part and by doing so, instructors can avoid “frustrational reading”.

Students become impatient when they do not understand the meaning of the literary texts and it turns into frustrational reading. When students will enjoy reading, they will be able to interpret it. Fu Hongchu (1998) claims, “students tend to form a better judgment on interpretations of a literary piece if they find it interesting to read”. Littlewood (1986) suggests that learners explore the world around them based on literature. Since literary language is generally more advanced it gives an ample opportunity to the learners to think about the language. Not only is literary language generally more vivid and hence more interesting than that of ordinary texts in a language book, but with its occasional use of dialect can also make the language appear authentic and more dynamic, which showcases the real life setting(Hongchu:1998). It is a good practice to familiarize them with different types and forms of writing so that they can compare two forms, particularly in the reader/writer relationship that is crucial to understand why and how texts are put together. Spack (1985) advocates that if students read literary works and are then asked to consider non-fiction essays, or vice versa, they can become aware of the different ways writers create texts to engage readers. Learners will be more aware of the difference between these two forms.

In addition, one of the reasons Vandrick (1997, cited in Erkaya, 2005) lists for using literature with students is that literature motivates students “to explore their feelings through experiencing those of others” (p. 1). Literature is often more interesting than the texts found in textbooks which triggers students imagination. When students will accomplish a range of tasks and activities centered on a literary text, they will be more personally familiar with the text. Collie and Slater (1999) highlight that “This effort they

have brought to it and the personal investment they have made in it will sharpen their understanding of literature personal reading at home.” (pg-9)

2.2.4 Literary texts promote overall language learning process:

Certain patterns of language can be learnt from literary texts. According to Ur (1999) literature is a good basis for vocabulary expansion that fosters the reading skill. Reading literature provides an opportunity to develop the extensive reading skill that automatically leads to language acquisition. According to Custodio and Sutton (1998, cited in Savvidou, 2004), literature is a valuable language tool (with authentic texts), so it can help second language learners to increase their motivation, explore prior knowledge, and promote literacy development. In this case, literature offers a bountiful and extremely varied body of written material, which is ‘important’ in the sense that it says something about fundamental human issues, and which is enduring rather than ephemeral (Collie and Slater: 1999). In the same line, Langer (1997, cited in Shang, 2006) comments, “Literature allows students to reflect on their lives, learning, and language. Literature can open "horizons of possibility, allowing students to question, interpret, connect, and explore". As it deals with human behaviour, it leaves room for students to express their own ideas and opens up doors to explore. In the same line of reasoning, Heath (1996) states, “ when students move in their literary writing through a range of emotions and motivations that draw from their own memories, expectations, and hopes, the hard work of L2 learning gets a strong helping hand.” (p. 778) Literature supports learners to open up their emotions complementing all the technical reading like journal articles or

argumentative essays where a lot of analysis is involved. When they read a short story they can imagine the setting and the emotion of the characters creating a different feeling altogether that Widdowson (1975,cited in Strong, 1996) supports, “literary texts offer a unique advantage over non-fiction ones because a literary work is separate, self-contained with its language fashioned into patterns of recurring sounds, structures and meanings”.(p. 4)

Even after having solid advantages, however, literature has not been used frequently in the language teaching context. Widdowson (1985) has addressed this state of literature in language teaching, “As far as English language teaching is concerned, literature has over recent years been generally eliminated from the program, together with other undesirable elements like grammar and translation, on the grounds that it makes no contribution to the purpose or the process of learning the language for practical use”, (p. 180) which is a common view of many teachers around the world. In our country especially, literature has become less popular after adopting CLT method in the early years of this century. At that time, language teaching and learning started to focus on the functional use of language. There was no complementary literary text to enhance students’ reading skill. Not surprisingly, students in this period lost interest in literature. Since they did not do any extensive reading up to their higher secondary level, their reading skill had also not been developed. When these students join tertiary level education where the medium of instruction is English, particularly in private university, they face serious problems with the reading materials. ELT experts around the world have concentrated on this serious issue and the role of literature in the ELT classroom has been re-assessed and many of them now view literary texts as the sole provider of rich

linguistic input, effective stimuli for students to express themselves in other languages and a potential source of learner motivation.

Recently, the use of literature in L2 class has gained popularity amongst language instructors. Many researchers have identified the value of teaching literature and Ronald Gray (2005) is one among many who pointed out reasons for teaching literature in the L2 classroom. According to him,

1. It helps students understand and appreciate cultures and beliefs different from their own. "By constructing with the literary text a reality different from that of texts of information, students are given access to a world of attitudes, and values, collective imaginings and historical frames of reference that constitute the memory of a people or speech community. Thus literature and culture are inseparable" (Kramsch 1992)
2. Literature is 'genuine' or 'authentic' material. Works of literature are usually not written for the specific purpose of teaching a language and are intended for native speakers.
3. Literary texts can serve as an example of certain types of language patterns and structures (like vocabulary usage and syntax). Literature also "provides a rich context in which individual lexical or syntactical items are made more memorable.
4. It can provide personal enjoyment to students, establishing an emotional and aesthetic connection between readers and the text, and helping to contribute to personal growth (McKay 1986) (Gray, 2005)

These advantages actually promote language acquisition in context. Collie and Slater (1999) believe that this can happen, as long as the reader is well motivated and as long as the experience of engaging with literature is kept sufficiently interesting, varied and non- directive to let the reader feel that he or she is taking possession of a previously unknown territory. If learners feel that they are the central part of the learning process then it is beneficial for the whole language learning process and eventually the class will be learner centered.

2.3 How a literary text can be used as a resource in language classroom?

The nature of teaching method of literature as a resource in language class is entirely different from a traditional literature teaching class. Duff and Maley (2004) point out that when literature is used in language classroom, techniques for the study of complete fiction or in-depth analysis of texts are avoided, both of which belong to the traditional study of literature. They also divulge that the reason why students do not like literature.

“One of the problems about more traditional approach to teaching literature was the way students were encouraged to use a kind of Lego-metalanguage (‘poetic sensibility’, ‘touching’, ‘expressive’, ‘evocative’ and so on.) One does not need to ‘speak literature’ in order to talk about it.” (Duff and Maley: 2004, p.10)

Frye elaborates (1964, cited in McKay, 1982), "It is clear that the end of literary teaching is not simply the admiration of literature; it's something more like the transfer of imaginative energy from literature to the students." (p.129) In other words, literature helps student to enrich their imagination and thinking ability through different language activities that Lazar (1996) describes as, "Unraveling the plot of a novel or decoding the dialogue of a play is more than a mechanical exercise-it demands a personal response from learners and encourages them to draw on their own experience." (p. 773) By doing so, learners become more personally invested in the process of language learning and can begin to own the language they learn more fully. In other words, literature is a tool that promotes student's overall learning process where they are more engaged and active to unfold any literary piece. This is because literary texts are often rich in multiple levels of meaning , and demand that the reader is actively involved in 'teasing out' the unstated

implications and powerful figurative meaning beyond its fixed dictionary definition. Thus by encouraging students to grapple with the multiple ambiguities of the literary text, one can develop overall capacity to infer meaning. This very useful skill can then be transferred to other situations where students need to make an interpretation based on implicit or unstated evidence.

However, in our context, the teaching methods as well as the materials like excerpts of essays and newspaper article present facts and absolute information that do not provide any space for students to explore their own world of imagination. They do not get involved personally with the task and text and eventually they lose interest in literature. Consequently, students do not develop their language competence. To solve this problem, literature can be the most appropriate tool that serves to enhance the students' reading and comprehension skill since it has the capacity to provide pleasure and enjoyment. To create an interactive atmosphere in the classroom, activities should be designed carefully so students get a chance to explore themselves. In this circumstance group discussion can be a good possible activity that allow the students to go beyond the text. Mink (1990) claims, that is "Discussion in group of five or six students force the students to become active participants in the learning process as students seated in circles help each other to make sense of the text" (pg-31). This discussion will train learning abilities, which will be necessary for students in reading texts of similar kinds on their own (Brumfit, 1984). In short, it is a stimulating pedagogic device. Besides group discussion, pair and group work are now well established as a means of increasing learners' confidence within the foreign language and also personalizing their contact with

it (Collie and Slater, 1999). According to same researchers, “When students share their thoughts with their partners they shift their attention away from the text which is often conducive to the creation of a risk-taking atmosphere in the class. (Collie and Slater, 1999; p.196). With the groups’ support and control, the individual has greater freedom to explore his or her own reactions and interpretations.

2.4 What language skills can be taught?

Language teachers’ aim should be to broaden the horizon for the learners to learn and here literature can play a major role. Arkian (2008) considers reading as the most important skill in language learning. He says, “From a classroom teaching perspective, reading is the solid rock around which all other skill-based activities are situated as the structure of the majority of ELT course books show.” To build a solid foundation on language, literature can be used as a touchstone in language classroom. For the desire to learn language, Brumfit & Burke (1986) point out that literature is sufficiently valuable for us to want to pass on the pleasure that reading it offers to us. It is a great material to explore various sub skills besides the basic four language skills. We should educate our students as a whole person an idea that Lazar (1993) elaborates upon:

“Literature may have a wider educational function in the classroom in that it can help to stimulate the imagination of our students, to develop their critical abilities and to increase their emotional awareness. If we ask students to respond personally to the texts, they will become increasingly confident about expressing their own ideas and emotions in English. They will feel empowered by their ability to grapple with the text and its language, and to relate it to the values and traditions of their own society.”(p. 9)

Only one language skill will not prepare a learner to get mastery over the second language. Teaching language in isolation from literature will not move students toward mastery of the four language skills (Abulhaija, 1987; cited in Shang , 2006). All the skills are interrelated that Goodman (1986, cited in Shang, 2006) states, “language is not learned from the part to the whole, but from the whole to the part, and all language functions are interrelated” In other words, students have to learn the foreign language in a holistic process in order to increase their language ability. As a result, ESL teachers must simultaneously apply teaching activities that tend to combine the four modes so as to enhance both literacy and oral development. It can expose students to a wide variety of styles and genres. It is in literature that the resources of the language are most skillfully used. The more the learners will read the more language exposure they will get. Byrne (2008) thinks that the increased exposure to language stimulates acquisition and expands awareness. The readers in the class automatically not only have more extensive vocabulary stores, but will also seem to possess greater communicative competence than the non-readers. However, use of literature will be successful only then when all the language skills will be integrated proportionately. Erkaya (2005) advocates integrating literature in the curricula by which students can learn the four skills – listening, speaking, reading, and writing are more effectively because of the literary, cultural, higher-order thinking, and motivational benefits. Collie and Slater (1999) elaborate that” reading a substantial and contextualized body of texts students gain familiarity and function of sentences, the variety of possible structures, the different ways of connecting ideas which broaden and enrich their own writing skills.” (p. 5) The learners will understand the context and it will complex sentence structure. Povey (1972, cited in McKay, 1982)

affirms, "literature will increase all language skills because literature will extend linguistic knowledge by giving evidence of extensive and subtle vocabulary usage, and complex and exact syntax." (p. 187) Critics may say that this discussion is just for the sake of discussion from which students will not get any benefit. Regarding this issue, Oster (1989) argues, "By viewing literature in this way, we are not just seeing issues and giving ourselves topics to discuss, but we are helping students learn how to read in new ways even as they write in new ways; we are giving them the opportunity to see." (p. 88)

McKay (1982), maintains that the aesthetic reading of literature increases students' motivation and further develops reading proficiency. In language class, reading should be meaningful for students so that reading does not simply mean language decoding activities and mechanical drills, which is a distorted image that Bangladeshi ESL students have about English. If more literature can be incorporated in the language class with a varied type of activity, it will be possible to remove this image. Indeed, literature offers students ample opportunities to develop their interpretative power--an important asset in language learning that greatly involves reading and comprehension skills. The possibilities are endless. In other words, aesthetic reading can be used not only for reading classes but can be successfully incorporated into writing and speaking classes. Last, but not the least, efferent reading in L2 has its own place and value in the reading class. There is no doubt that reading for information is important, especially when we live in the information age.

2.4.1 The reading skill:

In the era of CLT where literature was almost abandoned, Gregory Strong (1996) suggested three different ways of communicative pedagogy to use literature. According to him, one way is to provide a context in which to develop students' reading strategies and knowledge of non-fiction and literary texts are developed. Rosenblatt, (1978, cited in Takagaki, 2002) has divided this reading into two categories, one is 'efferent reading' and the other is 'aesthetic reading'. The former type of reading aims at gaining information in a text, while the latter type aims at enjoying the experience of reading. This does not imply reading literature is only for pleasure. It also develops their comprehension and analytical skills and students should have a clear idea about different genres of reading materials which will help them to develop different reading skills. However, the balance between aesthetic and efferent reading in class should always be carefully considered. Secondly, Strong (1996) argues that literature can form the basis of an extensive reading program with the attendant acquisition of new vocabulary as well as grammatical forms that will encourage students to develop positive attitude towards reading. Collie and Slater's (1999) view coincides with Strong and they claim that "this extensive reading program develops the students' ability to make inferences from linguistic clues and to deduce meaning from context" (p. 5). Thirdly, Strong (1996) proposes, the study of literature can provide the content of classroom language learning. It offers the opportunity to explore cross-cultural values. Erkaya (2005), affirms, "Students can gain insight into literature by gaining entrance to a world familiar or unfamiliar to them due to the cultural aspects of stories, and taking a voyage from the

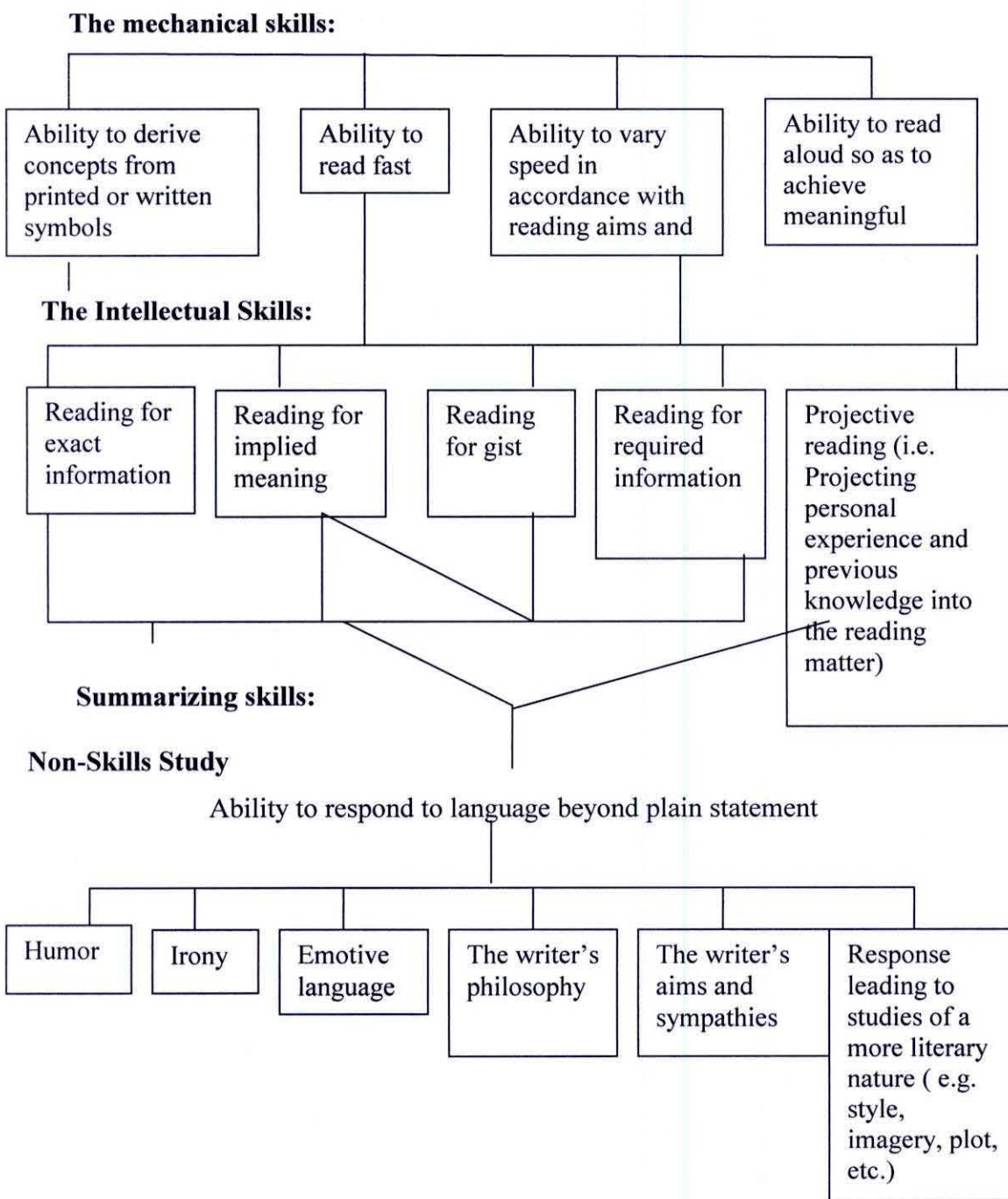
literary text to their own minds to find meanings for ideas, leading to critical thinking.” In the field of language teaching, ‘Critical Thinking’ is a prominent concept in language teaching for years, however, in our language classroom this concept is rarely used. Chance (1986, cited in Alagozlu,2007) sees critical thinking as the ability to analyze facts, generate and organize ideas, defend opinions, make comparisons, draw inferences, evaluate arguments and solve problems. When learners analyze the facts of a short story, illustrate the characters, describe the setting in L2 they do critical thinking. In essence, critical thinking is a disciplined manner of thought that a person uses to assess the validity of something (statements, news stories, arguments, research, etc.).In case of language learning, if any story, poem or novel triggers learners’ mind to respond, it will be enough to start the progression, with whatever language skill they have.

One major problem, already mentioned, is that students do not get enough reading materials to familiarize themselves with English language. They get very little scope to interact with a text. If students would get a chance to interact with a text, of course with enthusiasm, it would ultimately increase their reading proficiency. On the topic of reading, Smith has (1994,cited in Takagaki, 2002) two views. One stance is reading is seen as a skill with a number of isolated sub - skills that can be taught in isolation. This view includes such exercises as identifying the author’s main idea, noting relationships between ideas, or identifying and understanding paragraph organization. The other stance is whole language that treats reading as a process of constructing meaning rather than decoding or comprehending. Recent L2 reading research shows that extensive reading helps to improve students’ L2 language proficiency by focusing on the overall meaning

of the text, rather than on linguistic aspects of the texts (Day & Bamford ,1998 cited in Takagaki, 2002).

Brumfit (1984) sorted out all the possible reading processes, which is an extremely complex activity involving a combination of perceptual, linguistic and cognitive abilities. He has developed the following diagram (Figure :1) of the reading process consisting of mechanical skills, intellectual skills, summarizing skills and non-skills study. Mechanical skill is the basic steps of reading that prepares a reader to start reading, to increase the reading speed gradually, to understand the aim of the reading and finally to start thinking about meaning. The next level of reading process involves intellectual skills, where readers start looking for specific information, try to figure out the implied meaning, and often try to connect their life experience while reading At this stage readers start to move into the deep thinking process which is essential for language learning. In the third level, after reading the whole piece readers begin to respond to the language beyond plain statement where critical thinking and imagination come in.

Figure 1: Reading process:



(Brumfit,1984: 4)

Apart from reading, it is a good source to develop vocabulary as mentioned earlier. There can be many different ways to learn vocabulary while reading. However, the most important fact is that students should not consult with the dictionary immediately after confronting with difficult words. Grellet (2003) suggests,

“When dealing with a new text, it is better not to explain the difficult words to the learners. Students should be encouraged to make a guess of the meaning of the words they do not know rather than look into a dictionary from the beginning it is vital to develop the skill of inference.” (p.14)

When students will be challenged with word problems they will involuntarily try to infer the meaning, of course only then when they will be motivated to read. In this process, writing skill can be highly facilitated by literature as Oster (1989) confirms, “literature helps students to write more creatively. Instructors can create a variety of writing activities to help students to develop their writing skills”. (p.99) They can ask students to write dialogues or more complex writing activities if students have reached a high level of language proficiency (Murdoch, 2002; cited in Erkaya,2005) .

2. 5 What types of literature should be used in language classroom?

Selection of appropriate literature is a key issue to attain success in using literature in the ESL class. A text, which is extremely difficult to understand for the readers linguistically and culturally, will have few benefits. According to Littlewood (1986), “literature seen as linguistic structures provides the criterion of structural suitability.” (p. 181) He further explains that “reading material may be constructed both

in order to confront pupils with texts of an appropriate level of difficulty, and to provide them with repeated structures students need to internalize.” (p.181). If the materials are carefully chosen, students will feel that what they do in the classroom is meaningful and relevant to their learning process. They can learn from what they have read. In addition to the level of difficulty of the materials, the focus then can be on the underlying theme of the texts.

The most common problem with the student is that when students see more and more unfamiliar words, they consult the dictionary frequently and this slows down reading. Certainly, one common experience of most ESL students is their struggle with a language and culture with which they are unfamiliar. When they do not find any connection among their life, culture and the literature, automatically they lose interest to read. The literary work should have interest and relevance for the students. Teachers’ approach towards literature also has a significant value on language learning. Littlewood (1986) addresses this issue and suggests that teachers may need to take greater responsibility for choosing, adapting or creating interesting teaching materials for their respective classes. However, teachers are not always ready to take this challenge to tailor the text according to the students’ level. Bushman (1993) highlights this problem and further adds, teachers do not have confidence in the subject matter, and have a traditional view that English language teaching means the teaching of formal English grammar. As a result, students often do not enjoy the excitement that can come from the practice of different kinds of interactive activities by using literature. One way of solving this problem is to select literature, which will be relatively easy to read since our students are

often intimidated by the reading. If we give them something difficult it will hinder smooth reading. McKay (1982) argued that such selection is based on some measure of vocabulary difficulty and some indices of syntactic complexity, such as sentence length. Another way of dealing with this problem is to select texts from literature written for young adults. Since our target audience is young adults it will be easy to engage them in the reading process. According to Bushman (1993), the genre of young adult literature has many common characteristics such as conflicts, which are often consistent with the young adult's experience. Themes are of interest to young people, protagonists and most characters are young adults and the language parallels the language of young people. Students can make a connection between the text and their life. Donelson and Nilsen (1980, cited in McKay, 1982), have identified some characteristics of this genre where the themes more commonly deal with the problem of personal growth and development. If we think in terms of length we can choose short stories that are more appealing. Donelson and Nilsen (1980, cited in McKay, 1982) in their discussion of young adult literature supported short stories, "most literature for young adults tends to be relatively short, and the characters usually limited to a small cast of characters with a young adult as the central character". (p. 14,15) This type of writing keeps the reader focused and students can easily identify the themes. To make the reading more meaningful, students and teacher can explore the linguistic study. Bushman (1993) refers to the beauty of connection of the linguistic study with that of the young adult literature where students experience how their language works, not through dull, boring worksheets, but through the excitement that can only be found in reading. Murdoch (2002, cited in Erkaya, 2005) indicates "short stories can, if selected and exploited appropriately, provide quality text

content which will greatly enhance ELT courses for learners at intermediate levels of proficiency". Though there are other genres in literature, this research will focus on the short story as a source to teach language since it has several advantages.

2.5.1 Benefits of using short stories:

To many ELT experts and researchers short stories are a popular choice, especially for its length. Collie and Slater (1999) highly recommend the short story because of its practical length means they can usually be read entirely within one or two class lessons. Oster (1989) advocates for short stories as it is told from a single, limited point of view or through the eyes of one character make excellent vehicles for demonstrating the extent to which limited knowledge or an emotional stake in the events colors a character's vision. These include motivational, literary, cultural and higher-order thinking benefits that Erkaya (2005) has highlighted. These points are discussed below:

- **Motivating students**

According to Erkaya (2005), since short stories usually have a beginning, a middle and an end, they encourage students at all levels of language proficiency to continue reading them until the end to find out how the conflict is resolved. Elliott (1990, cited in Erkaya, 2005) affirms that literature motivates advanced students and is "motivationally effective if students can genuinely engage with its thoughts and emotions and appreciate its aesthetic qualities" He stresses the importance of developing student-

response (individual and group levels) and competence in literature. Collie and Slater (1999) have similar view and they believe that short stories are less daunting for a foreign reader to tackle and offer greater variety than longer texts.

- **Teaching culture**

According to Erkaya (2005) short stories are effective when teaching culture to ESL students since they transmit the culture of the people about whom the stories were written. By learning about the culture, students learn about the past and present, and about people's customs and traditions. Culture teaches students to understand and respect people's differences. When using literary texts, instructors must be aware that the culture of the people (if different from that of the students) for whom the text was written should be studied. As students face a new culture, they become more aware of their own culture. They start comparing their culture to the other culture to see whether they find similarities and/or differences between the two cultures.

- **Teaching higher-order thinking**

Of all the benefits of short stories, Erkaya (2005) identifies higher-order thinking as the most exciting one. High intermediate/advanced students can analyze what they read; therefore, they start thinking critically when they read stories. Young (1996, cited in Erkaya 2005) discusses the use of children's stories to introduce critical thinking to college students. He believes that "stories have two crucial advantages over traditional

content: . . . first, because they are entertaining, students' pervasive apprehension is reduced, and they learn from the beginning that critical thinking is natural, familiar, and sometimes even fun. Second, the stories put issues of critical thinking in an easily remembered context" (p. 90). Howie (1993) agrees with the use of short stories to teach critical thinking. He points out that instructors have the responsibility to help students to develop cognitive skills because everyone needs to "make judgements, be decisive, come to conclusions, synthesize information, organize, evaluate, predict, and apply knowledge." By reading and writing, students develop their critical thinking skills (p. 24). Intermediate level, high-intermediate level and even advanced students profit from literary texts. What they read gives them the opportunity to come up with their own insights, helping them to speak the language in a more imaginative way. They become more creative since they are faced with their own point of view, those of the main character(s) of the story and those of their peers. According to Oster (1989), this thoughtful process leads to critical thinking. As he confirms, "Focusing on point of view in literature enlarges students' vision and fosters critical thinking by dramatizing the various ways a situation can be seen". Therefore, when students read, they interact with the text. By interacting with the text, they interpret what they read. By interpreting what they read, they can work toward speaking English more creatively.

- **Teaching vocabulary and reading:**

Appropriately selected short stories for intermediate level can be a great source to learn new vocabulary and improve reading. Lao and Krashen (2000, cited in Erkaya,

2005) present the results of a comparison between a group of students who read literary texts and a second group who read non-literary texts at a university in Hong Kong to see how far students can improve their vocabulary. The result shows that, the group who read literary texts showed improvement in vocabulary and reading.

Collie and Slater (1999) acknowledge all these above mentioned benefits and comment, “Sharing literature with students is a spur to their acquiring these benefits, providing the teacher makes a balanced selection of activities and presents them with confidence.(pg-10). In other words, the most important factor is that when students will get an array of enjoyable students centered activities it is possible to develop a wish among students to read literature in the target language on their own initiative, though it is a high ambition.

2.6 What are the arguments against using literature?

Despite numerous practical benefits of using literature in ESL classroom, many critics are still against it. They have their own arguments, which certainly need to be addressed if we want to make the decision to bring back literature in the language classroom. Obviously, we all share the objective of promoting our students' awareness of the structure of the language. At the beginning of this chapter literature is referred as authentic text, which is a great source to expose students towards the wider ranges of language use. However, many teachers argue that since one of the main goals of ESL teachers is to teach the grammar of the language, literature, due to its structural

complexity and its unique use of language, does little to contribute to this goal (McKay: 1982). Savvidou (2004) asserts that there is often reluctance by teachers, course designers and examiners to introduce unabridged and authentic texts to the ESL syllabus. Teachers have a general perception that literature is particularly complex and inaccessible for the second language learner and can even be detrimental to the process of language learning. In the same line Savvidou (2004) has come up with two common beliefs of teachers, who consider literature inappropriate in the language classroom.

“Firstly, the creative use of language in poetry and prose often deviates from the conventions and rules which govern standard, non-literary discourse, as in the case of poetry where grammar and lexis may be manipulated to serve orthographic or phonological features of the language. Secondly, the reader requires greater effort to interpret literary texts since meaning is detached from the reader’s immediate social context; one example is that the “I” in literary discourse may not be the same person as the writer.”

What this means is that the reader has to infer, anticipate and negotiate meaning from and within the text to a degree that is not required in non-literary discourse. Thus, in our effort to teach learners’ communicative competence there is a tendency to make use of texts which focus on the transactional and expressive forms of writing with the exclusion or restriction of poetic forms of language – i.e. literature. Widdowson (1975, cited in Lazar, 1993) refutes this argument and states, “by asking students to explore such sophisticated uses of language, we are in fact encouraging students to think about the norms of language use. In order to understand the stylistic effect of any of the examples above, students will need to be aware of how they differ from more common usage.” (pg- 18) In other words, using literature with students will help them to become more sensitive

to some of the overall features of English. Moreover, McKay (1982) states, “the advantage of using literature to develop language use is that literature presents language in discourse in which the parameters of the setting and role relationship are defined. Language that illustrates a particular register or dialect is embedded within a social context, and thus, there is a basis for determining why a particular form is used.”(p. 529) As such, literature is ideal for developing an awareness of language use and for understanding the relationship between language and context.

McKay (1982) specifies another common argument, which is very strong among teachers and students that is the study of literature will contribute nothing to helping our students meet their academic and/or occupational goals which do not have enough validation. She feels this is invalid because,

“ It is important to remember that one need not assume that literature be studied to the exclusion of other types of texts. Hence, it need not be a question of either literature or prose. Rather, the question is one of whether or not the study of literature can in any way contribute to academic and/or occupational goals. Certainly, in so far as literature can foster an overall increase in reading proficiency, it will contribute to these goals.” (p. 530)

Reading literary texts are an interaction between writer and reader. This interaction, according to McKay (1982) , occurs on two levels: linguistic and conceptual. In other words, reading necessitates the ability to interact with a text by decoding the language and comprehending the concepts presented. Furthermore, these two levels often interact with each other.

Critics of the use of literature strongly believe that, literature often reflects a particular cultural perspective; thus, on a conceptual level, it may be quite difficult for ESL students to read (McKay: 1982). Certainly, this can be a problem. The question is whether or not any benefits can arise from examining the cultural assumptions of a piece of literature. Marshall (1979, cited in: McKay, 1982), in using English literature with Puerto Rican students, found that as she worked to help students overcome the difficulties of the text, her own appreciation of the text was clarified and her respect for the students' own cultural framework enhanced. Thus, literature may work to promote a greater tolerance for cultural differences for both teacher and student. Lazar (1996) in favor of using literature says that literary texts provide students with access to other cultures. Given the complicated relationship between literary works and the world, perhaps this access is more of a tantalizing glimpse of another culture than a mirror-like documentation of it.

It is important to note that, the new trend of teaching English is heading towards learner centered classroom and learner autonomy. Often teacher do not feel comfortable to leave their authority and give autonomy to the students, which eventually spoil language learning. Classroom environment should be more meaningful to the students so that they will be more involved. They should see through a different eye what the relation between literature and language is. Students coming from a traditional type of education system, put highest premium on memorizing. To them seeing through other eyes can be a new and sometimes threatening experience. Oster (1989) regarding this issue says, "if we do indeed hope to help students learn the language of seeing from different perspectives,

we will find in literature the ideal vehicle: Students become involved in a world that engages their feelings yet is not the world they actually inhabit.”

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHOD

This chapter explains the methodology of the study to examine student's attitude towards using literature in language classroom at tertiary level for a General English course. In the following section, the nature of the research and the research hypotheses will be mentioned in the background section. The other parts of this chapter will be devoted to the description of the participants, the research instruments employed for data collection, the research design and procedures, and the methods of analysis.

3.1 Background information and the research hypotheses:

In recent times, it has been realized and recognized by many language teachers and educators around the world that literary texts are a rich material to be used in ESL classroom. Not only that, it is believed that communicative classroom can be designed around a literary text as it is a means to develop creative thinking, language structure and cultural awareness. The importance of literary texts in language teaching and learning has long been established by a number of language researchers and linguists. However, learners' attitude toward the use of literary texts in language classroom has rarely been explored in Bangladeshi ESL context. The present study is targeted to explore this area and the researcher has used a 'short story' in a tertiary level English class to investigate students' response on this reading material. The reason behind choosing the short story as the focus of the research is because it is a good resource of reading and students can finish within short time. Moreover, as these students do not have much exposure on

reading English literature, short stories will be easier for them to understand compared to poem or other literary genres. The research had the following underlying hypotheses mentioned earlier in chapter one:

- Literary texts are a good source to enrich vocabulary.
- Literary texts will improve reading comprehension.
- Literary texts motivate learners to actively read and participate in class.
- Literary texts develop learners' creativity and imagination.
- Literary texts leave room for overall language development

3.2 Participants and setting:

The participants of this study were first year university students ranging in the age group of 18-20 years. The study was conducted in a private university in Bangladesh where the medium of instruction was English. This particular university has a separate department called Centre for Languages (CfL) that has been established to enhance students' language proficiency this is where the researcher is currently working. The research has been conducted in this centre and the researcher obtained permission from the authorities to do so. (See Appendix-A for the letter) Students were told that participation was strictly voluntary and that their identities would be kept confidential.

The overall English Language proficiency – Program (EL- Pro) of CfL department is divided into four modules. At the time of admission, CfL takes a diagnostic test followed by an interview by which they place students in different modules according to

their language ability. The researcher has focused on module 3 which is the first module where less proficient students are placed based on their test score and interview. It is generally found that majority of the students of this module come from Bengali medium. The duration of each module is three and half months consisting of 13 weeks. The aim of the course is to develop students' overall language skills where the speaking skill gets the highest priority among all skills. This course has also adopted critical thinking pedagogy, which aims to develop students' thinking ability. This allows students to give their own opinion and understanding. Each module is divided into two parts - reading/writing (R/W) and speaking/listening (S/L). (See Appendix-B for Speaking/Listening delivery plan) Each part gets two classes every week which means in each week students attend four English classes. The researcher teaches the speaking class of this module and she gets two classes each week. Though two parts are divided skill wise, all skills are integrated in both speaking and writing class. The speaking class has been created separately to give students more chance to practice speaking in English as they rarely do it. This class has been created to give a space to the students to put their speaking skill into practice.

According to the syllabus of module 3, in speaking section students read a short story called *The Town by the Sea* by the prominent writer Amitav Ghosh in the 7th and 8th week of the semester (See Appendix- C for lesson plan). In this lesson apart from speaking, reading and writing skills have also been integrated. The researcher has focused on this lesson since a literary text has been used as reading material and activities are designed around this story. As she teaches in this module it was possible for her to see

students' first reaction to a literary text, as these students did not have the experience of studying literary texts for interactive tasks in language classroom. Moreover, these students' exposure to English is very limited, in view of the fact that up till now these students have studied all the subjects in Bengali except English. Another point is that students of this module are generally not very motivated about learning English at tertiary level, even though these students are in the less proficient level. They have low motivation in the subject despite realizing its importance for their future work or studies.

3.3 Nature of the research:

3.3.1. Primary descriptive research:

The study is a primary research by nature. According to Brown (1988), primary research obtains original or first hand data to explore the original information regarding students' attitude towards literary texts by using questionnaire responses and interview responses. This study is also a descriptive research as it is based on hypotheses. According to Seliger and Shohamy (2003), in a descriptive study the researcher begins with questions, either general ones about the phenomenon they are studying or specific questions and with a specific focus. The participants of the study already exist in a natural context and they are studying in a private university in Bangladesh. This study has focused on this group's attitudes and opinions towards the use of literary texts, which has been taken from questionnaire. Seliger and Shohamy (2003) define this category of

research, which investigates already existing data with preconceived hypotheses as descriptive research. From this perspective, this research was a descriptive one.

3.3.2 Mixed methods research:

In addition this research is a mixed methods research as it combines both qualitative and quantitative research methods. Johnson, Onwuegbuzie, and Turner (2005, cited in Collins, Onwuegbuzie and Sutton, 2006) define mixed methods research as

“Mixed research is form of research where the researcher mixes or combines quantitative and qualitative research techniques, methods, approaches, concepts or language in a single study or set of related studies. This type of research should be used when the contingencies suggest that it is likely to provide superior answers to a research question or set of research questions.” (p. 19)

The researcher adopted this method as it produces superior answers of research hypotheses. Qualitative research, as defined by Brown and Rodgers (2002: 12), is “based predominantly on non-numerical data” whereas quantitative research contains data “gathered using those measures which lend themselves to being turned into numbers and statistics”. Quantitative data includes closed-ended information such as that found on attitude, behavior, or performance instruments. In contrast, qualitative data consists of open-ended information that the researcher gathers through interviews with participants. Mixed methods research focuses on collecting, analyzing, and mixing these both quantitative and qualitative data in a single study that provides a better understanding of research problems than either approach alone. Johnson & Onwuegbuzie (2004) believe that mixed methods research is a multiple approach in answering research question rather

than restricting or constraining researcher's choice. They also suggest that it is an expansive and creative form of research, not a limiting form. Turner (2003) (Cited in : Johnson & Onwuegbuzie , 2004) argues that research should collect multiple data using different strategies, approaches and methods in such a way that the resulting mixture or combination is likely to result in complementary strengths. In this study to make the analysis more comprehensive, mixed methods research has been employed that offers the best chance to investigate specific research hypotheses.

To summarize, this research was a primary research where mixed methods research was adopted and functioned as a descriptive research.

3. 4 Research Design:

3.4.1 Procedures:

In this research study, participants had read one short story titled: *The Town by the Sea* (See Appendix-D). This story is a part of the syllabus of module three. The teaching period of the short story was one and half weeks comprising 3 classes, and the duration of each class was 90 minutes. After completing the lesson, the students were asked to complete a questionnaire in which attitude towards the short story and learning experience of the students were recorded and fifty students took part in this survey. The researcher distributed the questionnaire soon after the class as it is easier for the participants to respond. According to Nunan (1992), if participants get the questionnaire right after the lesson they can have a good memory of their learning. In her own class, the researcher distributed and collected the questionnaire during class time. Student spent

20-25 minutes to complete filling in the questionnaire. However, in classes taught by other teachers she gave the questionnaire right after the lesson and selected one volunteer to collect them and submit it to her. It took almost 15 days to collect all the questionnaires. It should be noted that the teacher explained all the items on the questionnaire to the students clearly each time to prevent any misunderstandings.

After doing the survey, the researcher wanted to obtain an in-depth understanding on students' perception towards literary texts as a resource to be used in English class and so she interviewed students, which is an instrument of qualitative research. Ten students were randomly chosen for individual interview, which lasted for 10-15 minutes each. A set of open-ended questions were asked to each student in a predetermined order. The questions were related to the hypotheses. Students with different English proficiency in the class were chosen for the interview. All the interviews were held individually to ensure that students' responses were their own genuine thoughts, and not affected by their peers' opinions. Some interviews were audio-recorded and some of them were hand copied precisely by the researcher for future reference. Because of technical problems it was not possible for the researcher to record all the interviews. Since most of the participants had consecutive classes and it was almost in the middle of the semester, it was difficult for the researcher to get the students after the class to take interview and because of that she kept the number of interviews limited.

3.4.2 Research instruments for data collection:

In this research mixed methods has been adopted. Questionnaire is used as a research instrument to collect quantitative data whereas individual interview is taken to collect qualitative data. These two instruments are discussed below:

3.4.2.1 Questionnaire:

Questionnaires are a very popular data collection device. They enable the researcher to collect data in field settings (Nunan, 2002: 143). "Questionnaires are printed forms for data collection, which include questions or statements to which the subject is expected to respond to a stimulus provided by the researchers." (Seliger and Shohamy (2003: 172) In view of this, questionnaire items can be relatively closed or open ended, or a mixture of closed and open questions. In this research, both open and closed questions were used. Brown and Rodgers (2002: 142) state that "questionnaires are predominantly made up of more closed-response items such as Likert scales, multiple-choice, yes-no, and ranking". While responses to closed questions are easier to collect and analyze, it is likely that "responses to open questions will more accurately reflect what the respondent wants to say" (Nunan, 2002: 143). In this study, a sample questionnaire was piloted among three students before collecting the actual data to measure its validity and reliability. It is always a good option to try out the research instrument. Seliger and Shohamy (2003) believe, "The aim of the try out is to assess its quality while it can still be revised and improved before it is used with the actual subjects in the research." (Pg-195). After piloting the questionnaire the researcher found that students did not understand few words and they were confused while answering some questions. It was also noticed that the participants were being impatient as the questionnaire was two and half pages (back

to back) long and took more than 30 minutes to fill it up. From this finding and observation, the researcher revised the language and deleted a few questions from the questionnaire to keep it within two pages (back to back). Therefore, the revised questionnaire was easily understood and participants took less time when it was distributed to a large group. The questionnaire contained a mixture of closed and open questions respectively, with closed questions including ranking, scaled and multiple-choice items. The nature of these questions was largely attitudinal targeting to find out the attitudinal data such as attitudes, opinions, beliefs, interests, and values of the respondents towards the literary texts. To elicit data a written questionnaire comprising of 12 questions (See Appendix -E) with both fixed alternatives and open-ended questions have been used that are discussed below:

- **Background information on students' reading habit:**

The first three questions were asked to elicit background information of the learners pertaining to experience of reading English materials. Those were multiple-choice questions. In question 1, they were allowed to tick more than one option that would allow the research to explore reasons behind reading English materials. On the other hand, questions 2 and 3 were 'Yes/ No' questions that would help the researcher to find out learners' habit of reading literary texts.

- **Students' opinion and attitude towards the use of literary text in language classroom:**

Questions 4, 5, and 7 were closed questions and question 6 was an open-ended one. These were designed to get information about students' perception and their feelings towards literary texts. Question 6 elicited information regarding the reason behind

choosing a particular genre as a reading material for language class. It was intended to probe the thoughts of the students.

- **The overall language development process by using literary texts:**

Questions 8, 9 and 10 were asked to draw information regarding the reading process of the learners and to find out the difficulties faced by the learners while reading. In question 11 students were asked to compare different reading materials used in their language classes. The purpose of this question was to probe students' perception on the overall language development by using literary texts. Within this question, two open – ended questions were asked to let them explain their choice and space was provided in the questionnaire for the answer. Finally, question 12 was open-ended which was asked to bring out the inner thought of the learners, their attitudes, and feelings right after completing the activities based on the short story.

3.4.2.2. Individual Interviews:

“The elicitation of data by one person from another through person-to-person encounters” is called interview (Nunan, 2002 : 231). Like questionnaires, interview is broadly used as a research tool in language studies (Nunan, 2002: 149). Interviews can be characterized into three types, in terms of their degree of formality. Nunan (ibid) states that interviews should be placed on a continuum ranging from unstructured through semi-structured to structured. In this study structured ‘open- ended questions (See Appendix-E) were asked to the students as Seliger and Shohamy (2003) advocate that structured interview is focused on a particular issue meanwhile open-ended questions allow

participants to express themselves freely. In this way the topic was controlled but personal response was permitted.

3.4.3. Methods of Analysis

Different research instruments go with different ways of analysis, which complement one another, and this is more likely give rise to comprehensive study. After collecting all the questionnaires the quantitative data was submitted to statistical analysis. Seliger and Shohamy (2003) have suggested, “To analyze quantitative data frequencies are used to indicate how often a phenomenon occurs and they are based on counting the number of occurrences.” (Pg-211). In this study, the researcher computed the frequencies for the selection of each option by each students and it was then tabulated and converted into percentages. Tables, pie charts and bar diagrams were employed for the presentation of the data. Apart from the use of questionnaires, qualitative data was collected from students’ individual interview. The researcher recorded and hand copied the interview and translated the full transcription into English (see Appendix- G). While doing so she avoided students’ pauses and hesitations. During interview students were allowed to speak in both Bengali and English so that lack of English was not a problem in expressing opinion. Afterwards, the researcher sorted relevant segments of texts and collated the answers according to the commonalities and patterns emerged across the various data, which is one system of analyzing qualitative data (Seliger and Shohamy, 2003). They further clarify that this system is derived either from a conceptual framework or from the specific research questions (Seliger and Shohamy, 2003). In case of the present research, data was analyzed based on research hypotheses. After analyzing two

different types of data separately, the results were compared to measure the validity of the overall findings get an in-depth understanding of the students' general perception on the use of literary texts. After that the results were checked with the hypotheses to confirm whether they were true or not.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this chapter, the raw data, both quantitative and qualitative, obtained from the questionnaires and interviews respectively on students' perception on literary texts as a resource in language class are presented. Both quantitative and qualitative data will be analyzed and interpreted.

4.1 Analysis of the questionnaire:

The questionnaire contains 12 questions including multiple choices, ranking, Yes-No, scaled and open-ended questions that have been used to elicit added information from the students on different areas. This questionnaire was organized in such a way that after collecting and analyzing the findings of the quantitative data, it would reflect students' general attitude and opinion on whether they want literary texts in the language classroom. In this section, students' responses collected from the questionnaires are analyzed below.

4.1.1 Background information about students' general reading habit:

The data collected from the first three questions of the questionnaire presented students' general reading habit in English. The first question was asked to discover the purpose behind reading English materials. In this question, there were four options and students were allowed to choose more than one option. The raw quantitative data that has been converted into percentage is presented and analyzed in two categories. In one category, the responses have been combined to show the percentage of each category or

reading purpose. Additionally, in the second category a combination of responses has been tabulated to get an in- depth view of students' response.

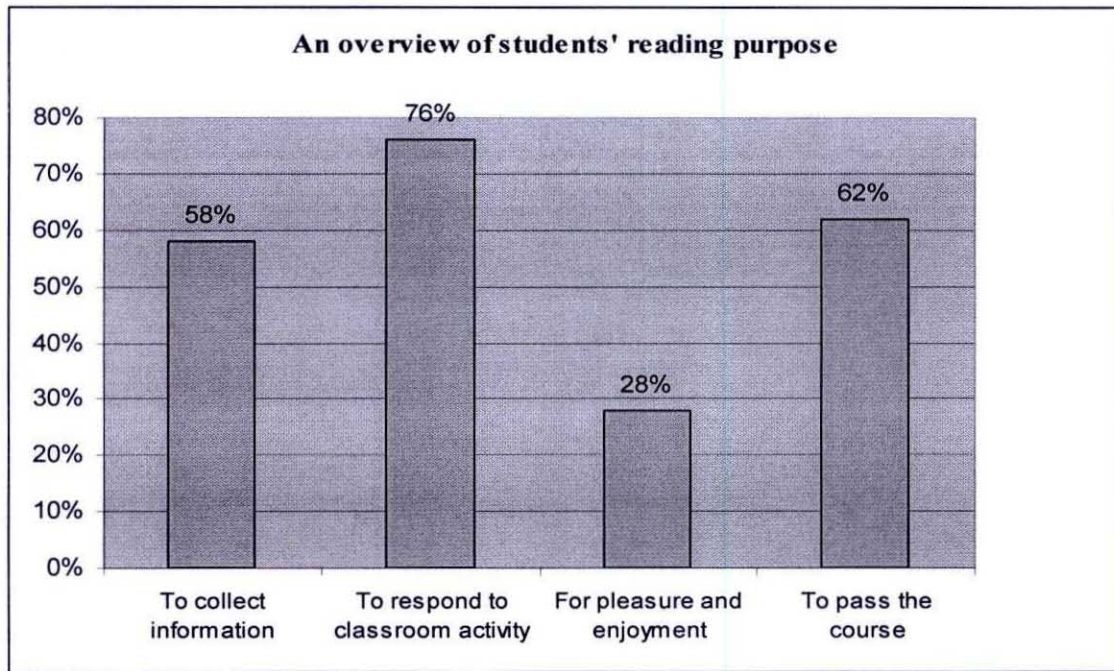


Figure 1: A general overview if students' purpose of reading English materials

From the above figure, it is noticed that the majority of the students (76%) read English materials to participate in classroom activity and to pass the course. Those who read for classroom activity, they read the materials provided by the teacher on a regular basis to participate in class as there are marks for participation. On the other hand, a large portion of students (62%) read only to pass the English course. Similarly, a good number of students (58%) read to collect information in general that cannot be ignored. A very few number of them (only 28%) actually read for pleasure. In this question, students were allowed to choose a combination of all four options, and the table below illustrates the purpose of reading English material from students' point of view more precisely:

Table 1:

Students' purpose of reading English materials

Options	Purpose behind reading:	Students' response (50 participants)	Percentage
1	To collect information	1	2%
2	To respond to classroom activity	6	12%
3	For pleasure	2	4%
4	To pass the course	3	6%
5	To collect information and to respond to class activity	4	8%
6	To collect information and for pleasure	1	2%
7	To collect information and to pass	6	12%
8	To Respond to class activity and for pleasure	2	4%
9	To Respond to class activity and to pass	7	14%
10	To collect information, to respond to class activity and for pleasure	3	6%
11	To collect information, to respond to class activity and to pass	10	20%
12	All four	5	10%

Out of 50 participants, only 12 participants selected only one option and 38 respondents selected a combination of purposes of reading English materials. Their responses varied significantly and this is presented in the figure below:

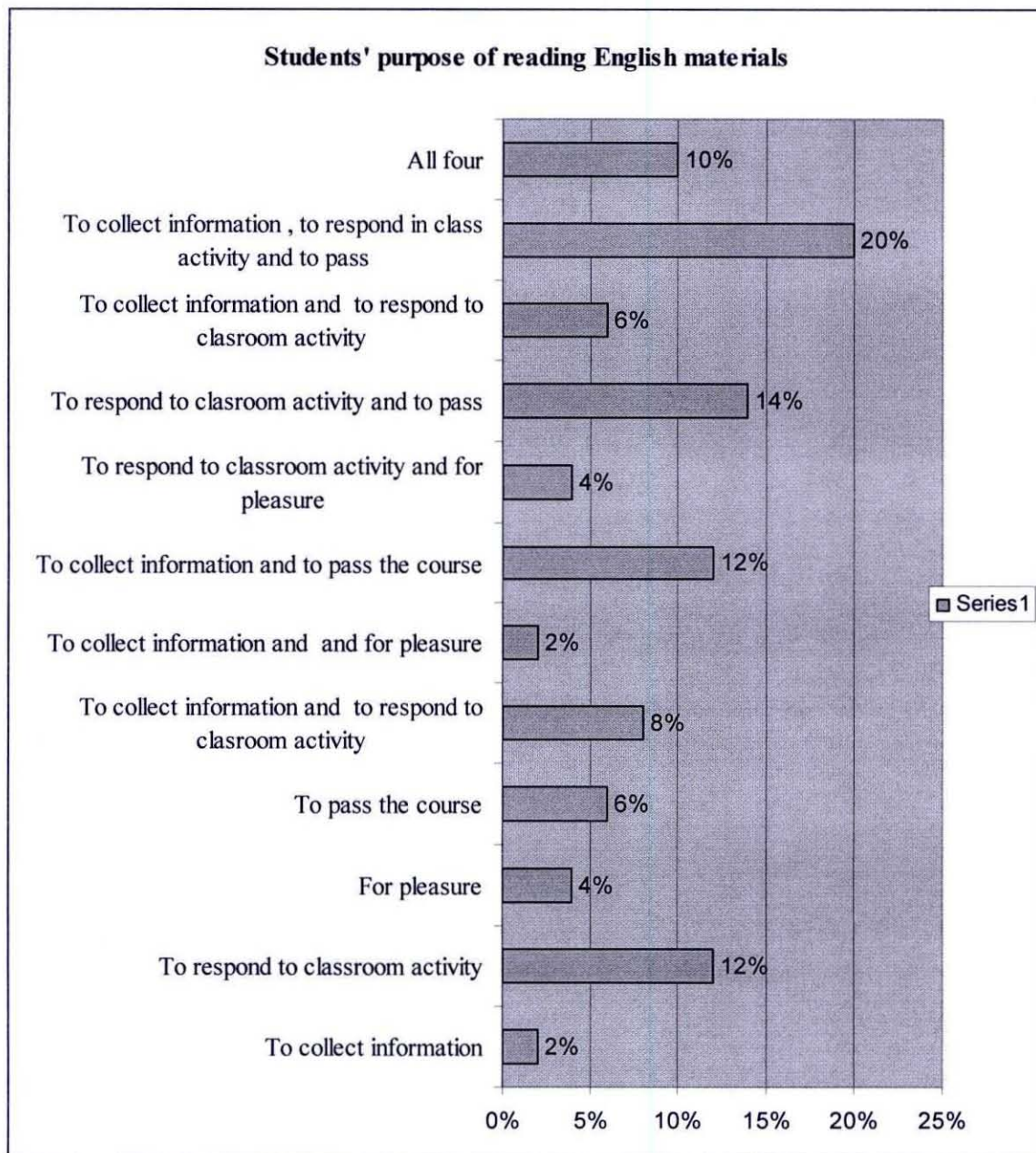


Figure 2: Students' purpose of reading English materials

From the above graph it is clearly realized that the majority of the participants selected more than one reason for reading English materials. It is apparent that the majority of the participants read English material to collect information, to respond to the class activity and to pass the course, which implies they read materials only when they

have to. A very few number of students actually read for pleasure and enjoyment. It can be said that these students do not have much interest in reading for pleasure. Even if they read, they do it just for the language course. They are not used to read extra materials outside the course book. It is also noticeable that these participants are not very enthusiastic about reading in English and they do not do any extra reading. Among all the responses, 10 % have selected all four options, which entails that these students are enthusiastic in reading English material. A significant number of participants read to collect information and to pass the course which is a positive sign for their academic success.

The second question invited information about students' previous experience of reading literary text. It was a Yes- No question where 19 students gave positive response and 31 of them responded negatively. The result, shown in percentages, indicates that almost 62% students do not have any experience of reading literary texts whereas only 38 % have some kind of experience.

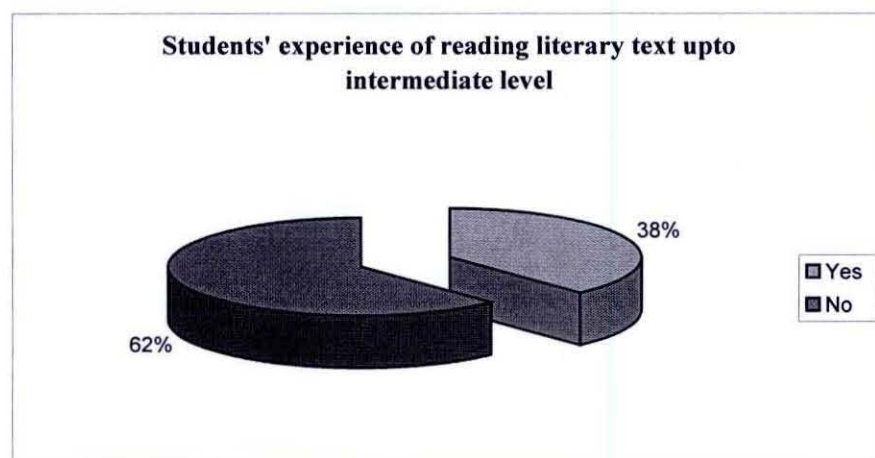


Figure 3: Students' experience of reading literary text up to Intermediate level

This figure shows that the majority of the students are not familiar with literary texts which eventually affects English learning. Those who selected 'Yes', were then asked to indicate what type of literary texts they read previously. 10 out of 19 students listed 'short story', and 9 of them mentioned short story and poetry. A follow up question was asked to determine whether they liked reading those texts or not, where all of them answered, they enjoyed reading those texts. They added that the story was a reading comprehension and after reading they worked on comprehension questions. Those who picked poetry stated that they worked on simile and metaphor and they also liked those activity.

The third question was asked to find students' general reading habit in English. It was again a 'Yes-No' question where 15 students answered 'yes' and 35 students answered 'No'. The result is shown in percentages below:

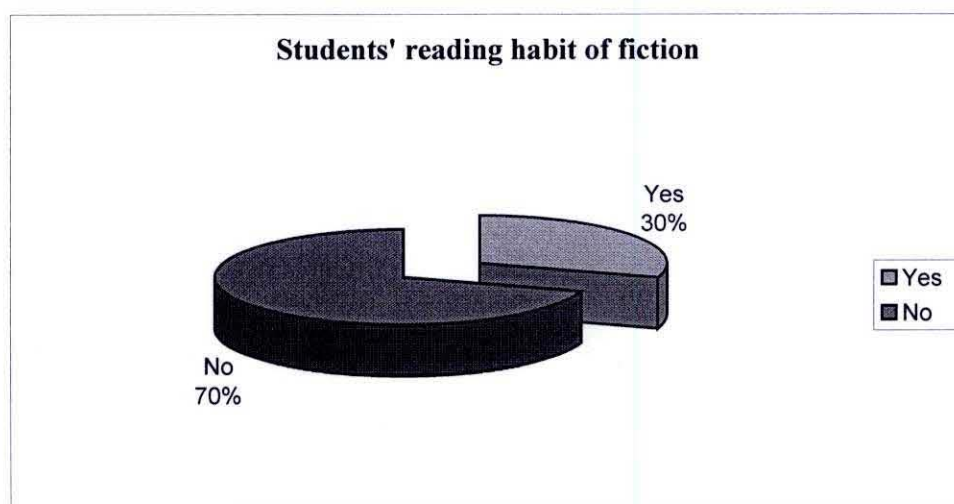


Figure 4: Students' reading habit of fiction in English

On the whole, it is evident that the majority of the students do not have much experience of reading English material, let alone short story. Moreover, in their previous English classes up to H.S.C. level, literary texts were not widely used to teach language.

The majority of the students read literary texts only when it is necessary. A small number of students read fiction for pleasure. From this finding it is assumed that their reading skill in English is not advanced as they have minimum contact with English texts.

4.1.2 Students' opinion and attitude towards the use of literary text in language classroom:

The aim of the researcher was to explore students' common attitudes towards reading literary texts, which are not widely used as a resource in language classroom. In order to obtain related data, question 4 was designed. The researcher listed 6 views towards literary texts and students were asked to tick the most suitable option for them. The raw data is presented in the table below along with percentages :

Table 2:

Students' approach towards reading literary texts:

Attitude	Total response out of 50	Percentage
Interesting	28	56%
Boring	0	0
Useless	0	0
Challenging	10	20%
Though Provoking	8	16%
Not sure	4	8%

If we look at the graphical representation of students' attitude towards reading literary texts below then it is clear that to 56% literary text is interesting to read, which means if literary text is used in the class they will be interested to read it. In addition, 20% of them perceive it as challenging, 16 % think that it is thought provoking and only a few of them are not sure about their attitude towards literary texts. From the analysis it

is also clear that many students perceive reading short story as challenging as they are not used to read in English. Only a small portion of participants were not sure which reveals that they do not have any habit of reading fiction. It's optimistic that, none of them ticked it as boring or useless. Therefore it can be said that the majority of the students do not think literary texts are boring.

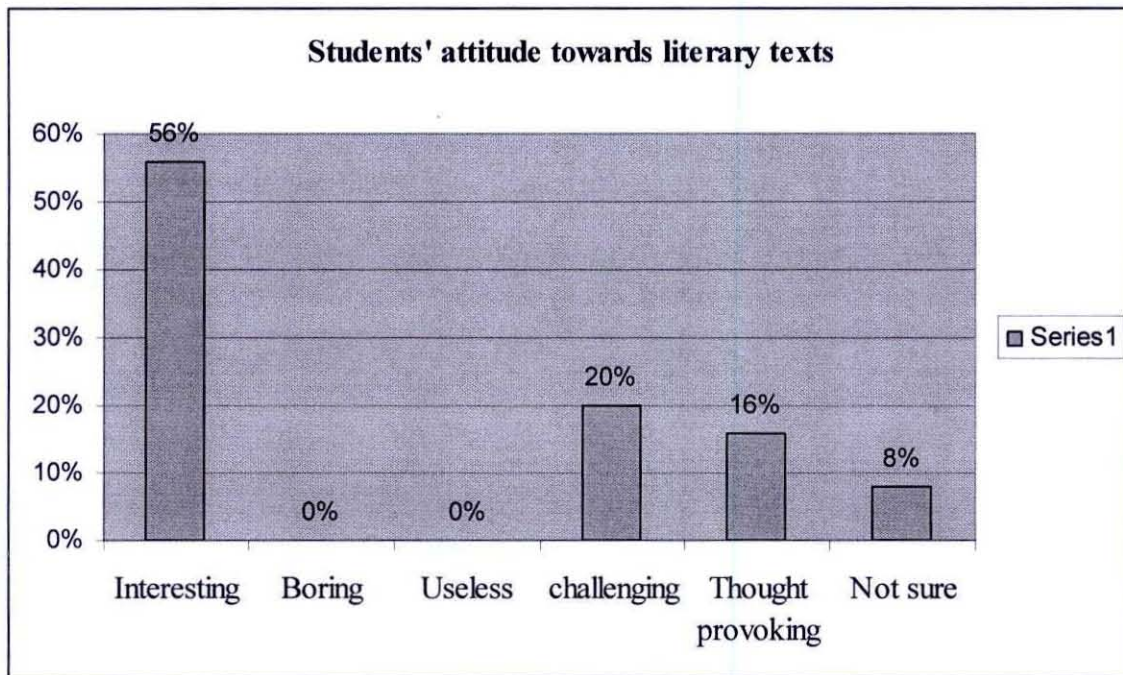


Figure 5: Students' attitude towards reading literary texts

Question 5 was asked to judge students' preference of selecting literary texts if they would get a chance to choose. In this question they were allowed to choose more than one category and in that case they had ranked it according to their priority. The first choice of all the participants was short story though they chose more than one. Among 50 participants, only 11 chose only short story, 5 picked short story and poetry where poetry was the second choice and 19 of them selected short story and drama where drama was

the second choice. 6 of them chose short story, drama and poetry. None of them selected novel. Participants responses are categorized in the following graph.

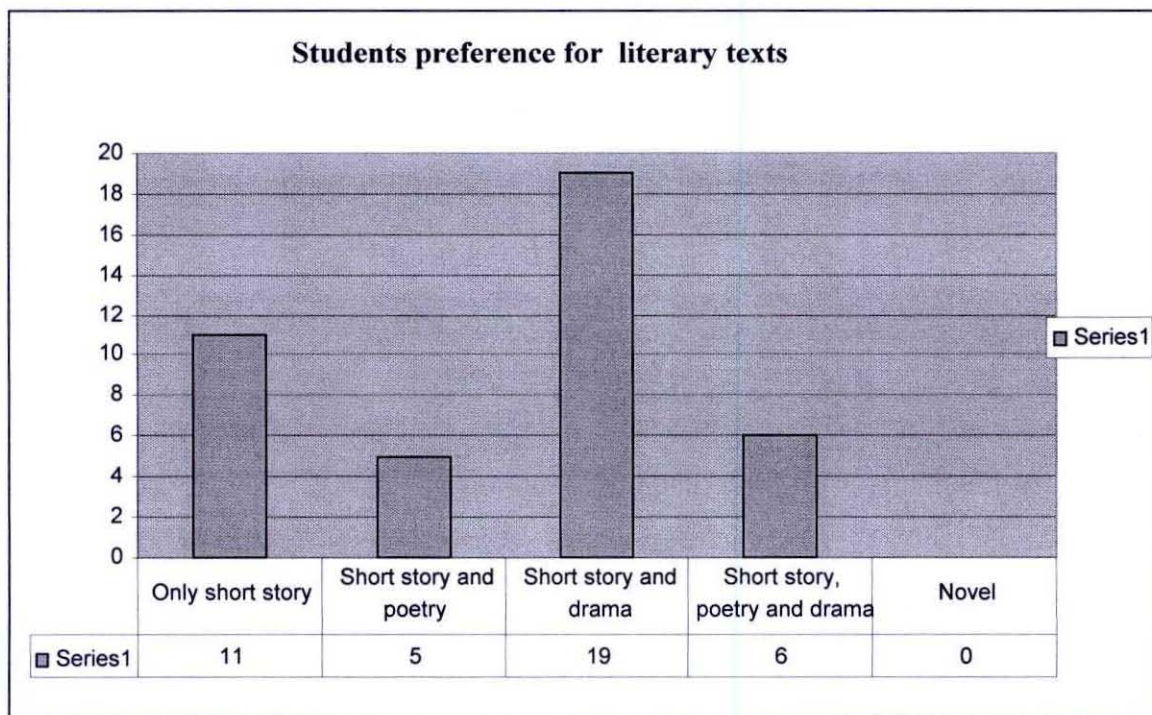


Figure 6: Students' preference to read literary genre in language classroom

From the above figure it is found that, 38 % students preferred both short story and drama instead of only short story though only short story is a popular choice. Some of them even selected poetry.

Followed by question 5, one open-ended question was asked to obtain the reasons for their preference of a particular genre. The data showed that those who chose short story the common answer was short story is 'interesting', 'fun to read', 'easy to read in the class' and 'take less time to read compared to drama or novel'. The majority of the students who chose both short story and drama commented that their reading skills could

be enhanced through short stories and drama. They also commented that drama was conducive to improve their speaking skill as they would get the chance to practice conversation within pair or groupwork. From the above data, the researcher's understanding is that, students prefer drama along with short story as it presents the natural expression of daily life. They highlighted that both reading and speaking skill can be developed through short story. This finding indicates that students' preference has a great influence on their learning as they have explored the reason why they want one particular genre, which is an important factor for successful language learning. As students preference is obtained now it is time to check whether they really think short story will be helpful for them or not and the next question surveyed this area.

The next question of the questionnaire, question 7, attempted to scrutinize students' opinions on the relationship between literary texts and its effectiveness in facilitating English learning. In this question, ten benefits of using literary texts were listed. Their responses were measured on a scale of, ' Agree' 'Neutral' and ' Disagree', among which students' were asked to circle the number for each option. The findings presented in the following table gives us a general understanding of participants' general perceptions on reading literary texts. The overall result is converted into percentage and afterward the findings are categorized and analyzed below to get a precise understanding of students' perception on reading literary texts .

Table 3

Students' general perceptions on reading literary text in language classroom.

ITEMS		Agree	Neutral	Disagree
1.	Grammar items can be learnt through literature.	28 (56%)	22(45%)	0
2.	Vocabulary can be increased through literature.	50 (100%)	0	0
7.	Reading proficiency can be developed.	42 (84%)	8 (16%)	0
4.	Creativity can be promoted through literature. (Creative writing based on the story)	45 (90%)	5 (10%)	0
5.	Common expressions used in everyday life can be learned through literature	50 (100%)	0	0
6.	Literary texts are more motivating than non-fiction.	30 (60%)	20 (40%)	0
3.	The actual use of language can be learnt through literature.	34 (68%)	16(32%)	0
8.	Knowledge about others' culture can be expanded.	42 (84%)	8 (16%)	0
9.	Learners become more imaginative.	45 (90%)	5 (10%)	0
10.	Learners can relate their own world of experience with the text.	50 (100%)	0	0

The above findings are summarized in the following figure where all the items of this question are referred in numerals. In the figure only 'agree' and 'neutral' scales are used as no one circled 'disagree'.

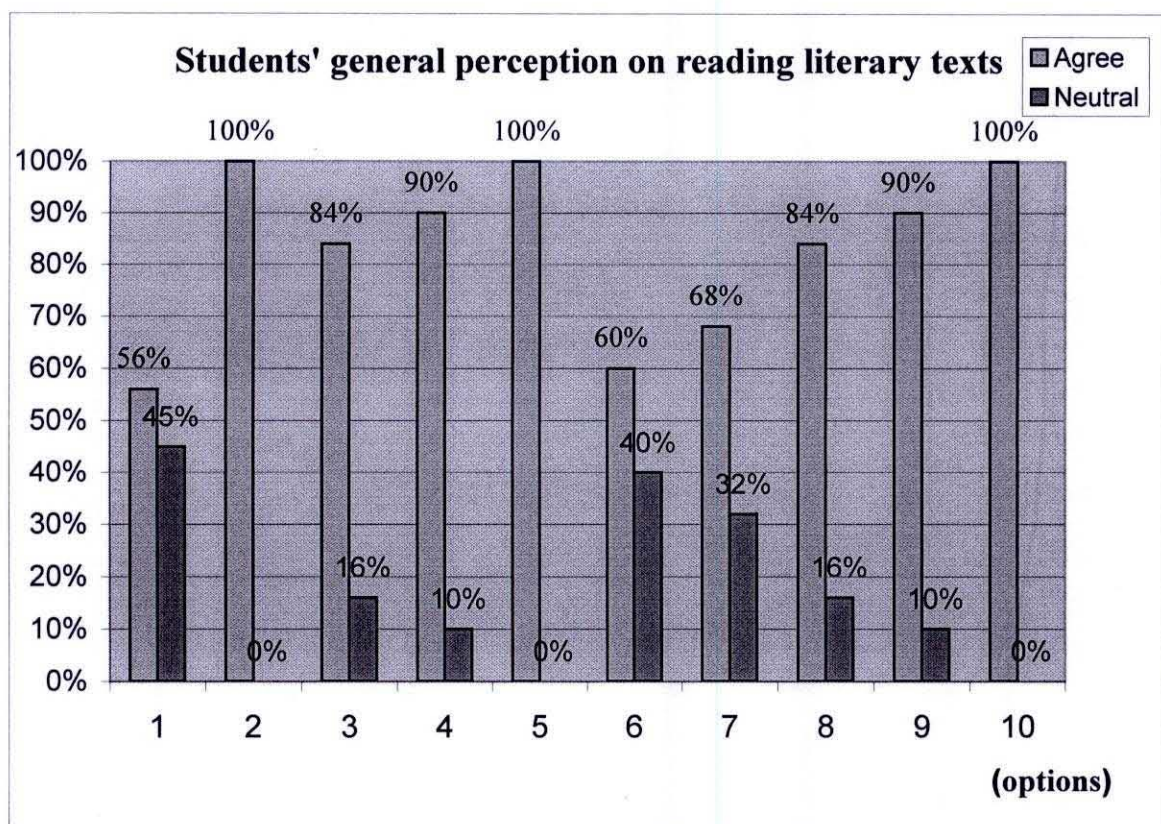


Figure 7: Students' general perception on reading literary texts

From the figure it is clear that in most cases literary texts have received large numbers of votes except for grammar and motivation that are discussed below in detail.

- **Grammar items and vocabulary:**

From the above result it could be seen that 56 % agreed that grammar items could be learnt and the rest of them were neutral. Although the result favors grammar acquisition, students are unclear about it. Comparatively, the positive response rate was quite high, because these participants did not do any grammar activity based on literary text before and even in the lesson (short story – *The Town by the Sea*) no grammar activity was included. This question was asked to elicit students' general perception on this issue. The major finding of it is that students thought about it and responded

positively. 44% of the participants were neutral at this point, which is expected. In terms of vocabulary learning all the participants agreed that by reading short stories vocabulary could be learnt easily and no one was neutral.

- **Reading proficiency:**

The above result shows that students are very positive on this issue. It implies that reading proficiency can be developed through reading literary texts. 82% responded positively where as only 12 % was neutral. The finding of this item indicates the majority of the participants thought about it and decided that literary texts could be used to develop their reading skill and they had a positive attitude towards literary texts, this goes against the assumption that students do not like to read English.

- **Creativity and imagination:**

90% of the participants agreed that creative writing based on literary texts could be used to expand their creativity. Only 10% of them were not sure about this advantage of reading literary texts. They did not think of how creative writing could assist them to improve their writing at the same time. In case of imagination, the findings shows that, 90% response was 'agree' whereas only 10% was neutral. The findings are in line with the suggestions proposed by Ur (1999) that literary texts can supply an excellent jump-off point for discussion or writing at the same time it encourages empathetic, critical and creative thinking.

- **Common expressions of daily life and the actual use of language:**

All the responses regarding learning common expressions was positive where participants agreed that daily life expressions could be learnt through literary texts. In case of learning the actual use of language 68% response was positive which means,

participants had realized that literary texts were the authentic example of the language use apart from any other form of writing. 32% response was ‘ neutral’ in this item.

- **Motivating**

From the result, it was clearly realized that 60% participants found literary texts interesting and motivating to read rather than other reading materials that matches with McKay (1986) who affirms that selected texts, if interesting to students, can motivate them to read, thus increasing their reading proficiency. On the other hand, 40% of the participants responded ‘ neutral’ which meant they were not very convinced whether literary texts were motivating to read or not. The ratio of positive response is not significantly different from neutral. If we take a look at these participants’ reading habit in English, it is clear that why the ratio is not significantly different. Since they read for instrumental purposes they do not find literary texts very motivating. In spite of 60%, we have a large portion (40%) not very positive regarding motivation. Most of the participants do not have a reading habit in English and that is why they selected ‘neutral’.

- **Knowledge about others’ culture and relationship between participants’ own world of experience with the text:**

Results showed that, 84% agreed with this benefit and the rest of them were neutral. They felt a connection with the text, which is an essential practice to be a successful language learner. It implies that while reading literary texts students associate their life with the culture of others. Usually learners perform better when they find motivation or a personal connection with the text.

Many scholars (Duff and Maley, 2004; Collie and Slater 1999 Ur, 1999; Custodio and Sutton, 1998: quoted in, Savvidou, 2004) encourage language teachers to incorporate literary texts into language classroom because they believe that literature are

authentic materials that has a genuine feeling and works as a powerful motivator, which learners can relate their life with the texts and eventually that promotes literacy development. The findings of this section match with the beliefs that the scholars have, since students accepted that literary texts were motivating to read through which they could develop their vocabulary and reading skill.

4.1.3 The overall language development process by using literary texts:

Question 8 asked whether students found reading literary texts more difficult than non- literary texts. Among 50 participants 40% responded ‘ Yes’ and 60% responded ‘No’ which shows that majority of the readers did not find literary texts difficult to read, rather they found it interesting if we consider the previous questions. Here a consistency in the responses has been observed. Though majority found short story not difficult, a large portion of the participants found it difficult. Once again if we consider these participants’ reading profile, it is easily understood why a large portion of the participants found reading the short story difficult. The data collected from this question is converted into percentage that is given below:

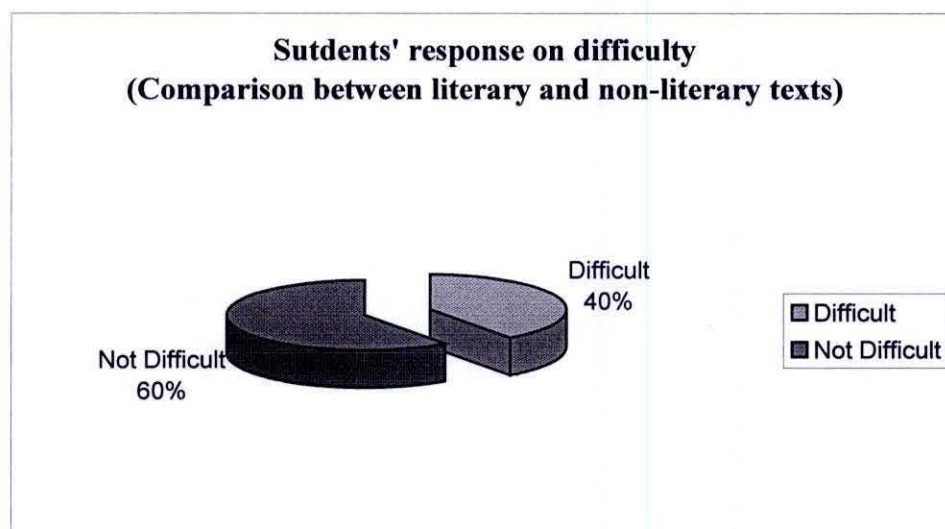


Figure 8: Students' response on the difficulty level:

Question 9 was a follow up question of question 8 where students were asked to list the difficulties they had faced while reading the text and the responses were quite similar. The result is shown in the table below:

Table 4:

Difficulties faced by the students' while reading:

Difficulties	Response
Unknown words	50
Takes more time to understand	32
Pronunciation	15
Understanding sequence	18
Complex sentence structure	24
Meaning is not always clear	10

From the result it is found that the major problem while reading literary texts was too many unknown words that had hampered a smooth reading. Short story has a time frame and everything takes place sequence wise, which sometimes become difficult for the students to keep track within the story. Many of them responded that because of the

complex sentence structure, meaning remains unclear to them. Moreover, many of them identified that they did not know the pronunciation of many words.

Question 10 asked on which aspect students focused most while reading the short story in the class and it was a multiple choice question. The result of their response is given below:

Table 5:

Students' focus while reading:

Reading aspects	Total Response	Percentage
Understanding the overall meaning	43	86%
Understanding the language in use	5	10%
Understanding the word meaning	2	4%

From the above table it is understood that a large number of participants focused on the overall meaning while reading , whereas only 10% focused on language in use and only an insignificant percent of the participants focused on word meaning. Though participants listed that unknown words was one of the difficulties they faced while reading, when they answered this question their responses varied. Here a very insignificant number of students focus on the word meaning that is a good sign for language learning. The results are shown in the figure below:

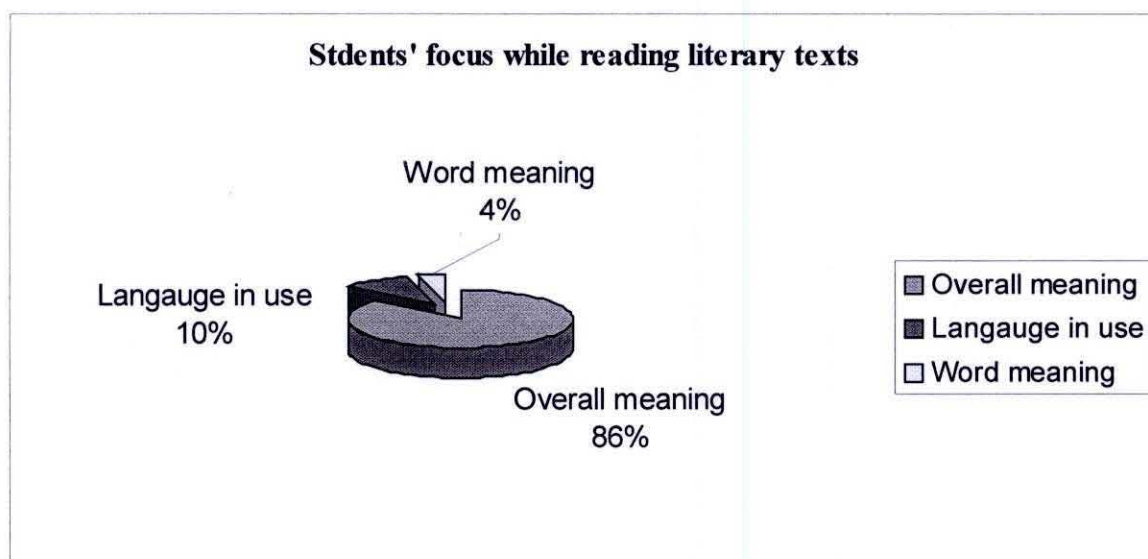


Figure 9: Students' focus while reading

Question 11 was planned to examine students' opinion and belief on the overall language development process by reading literary texts. In this section, participants were asked to compare newspaper articles, essays and short stories to measure, which one was the most useful for them to develop the language skills listed in the table. In item A and B open-ended questions were asked to discover a clear insight about learners' preference of reading materials. The results were insightful.

- **Vocabulary:**

. In item A, 38 participants agreed that they learnt more vocabulary through reading short stories and 12 of them ticked newspaper. Among all the participants, 6 of them didn't attempt the open-ended question. 34 participants (selected short story) and 10 participants (selected newspaper article), expressed their opinion behind selecting the material that is presented and analyzed below:

Table 6.1

Comparison amongst three different types of reading materials:

ITEMS	Newspaper article	Essays.	Short Stories
A. From which type of material did you learn the most vocabulary? Why? (Explain in the given space below). _____	12(24%)	0	38 (76%)
B. Which one was most effective to learn grammar items ? (Explain in the given space below).	17 (34%)	12 (24%)	21 (42%)

In the above-mentioned open-ended question in item A, 10 participants selected newspaper article from which they had learnt the vocabulary most and they provided reason for that. Their responses were alike and are condensed below with total response:

1. *Newspaper contains current events, information of recent times that keeps us updated.*
2. *Its available, anyone can afford it and it uses easy words so that anyone can understand.*
3. *Vocabularies of newspaper are easy to understand, in short story they are too complicated, I loose interest if I don't understand*

From the above responses it is visible that this category of students does not want to take challenge of learning process and always looks for the easy way, which is not a good practice of a successful language learner. However, the positive sign is that these students are few in number.

On the other hand, over half of the participant selected short story and their responses are almost same that are put together below with the total response.

- 1 *Writers use variety of words, which are not always known to us. (15)*
- 2 *We can understand the meaning after reading the whole passage. (10)*
- 3 *It contains literary words that are helpful for us to learn more vocabulary and its use (9)*

The finding of this item clearly reveal that to enrich vocabulary students found short stories as a good source where writers use different words to express one theme with which, they are not familiar. Eventually, students get an exposure to a variety of words through which they can enrich their vocabulary. It also shows that they can understand the story even though they do not know the exact meaning of some words, but at the end they can understand the main theme and when they again read it, the meaning of words becomes apparent to them. Moreover, these students are concerned about not only learning new words at the same time but also learning the use of those words in context. Though these participants are confronted with lots of difficult words while reading the story *The Town by the Sea*, they have shown a positive attitude towards reading the short story and at the end of the lesson they have learnt a cluster of new words.

- **Grammar items:**

In item B, students were asked to select one reading material, which would be most effective to learn grammar items. 17 participants selected newspaper article, 12 selected essays and 21 selected short stories. Among them 19 participants did not respond in this open-ended question and the rest of them provided their explanation behind selecting one particular type to learn grammar and their responses are presented below:

Newspaper articles:

Those who selected newspaper articles have reflected a similar type of understanding, some of which is presented below:

- 1. My aim is to learn English, and I focus on the structure more that's why I read newspaper. (1)*
- 2. In newspaper, grammar is easy to learn as it uses simple structure. (2)*
- 3. We find grammar structure presented clearly that is not present in short story. (2)*
- 4. In short story, writers don't always follow a strict structure. That's why I prefer newspaper article where it more structure. (3)*
- 5. Newspaper articles do not use very complicated tense, which is useful for me to learn grammar. (2)*

Essay:

- 1. It shows some grammar items that in which U always do mistakes. Essay its more structured and easy to learn grammar. (1)*
- 2. In essay, writer takes care of the grammar, which is sometimes absent in short story and more complicate. (3)*
- 3. Essay follows a grammar structure, which is easy for me to follow. (3)*

Short stories:

- 1. It's the practical use of English language. (3)*
- 2. It contains different tense in one text, which is really helpful for me to understand the whole context. Automatically it helps me to learn tense. (3)*
- 3. Short story is a good source to learn tense, as I need to follow the sequence to understand the story better. (1)*
- 4. To express emotion writer use different patterns of sentences, which I think, is useful for us to learn complex sentence. (1)*
- 5. We can learn how to use the language rather than doing a lot of grammar exercise. (5)*
- 6. I can learn direct and indirect speech from the ss, which is very important to understand who is saying what to whom. (1)*

If we analyze the above data collected from the open ended questions of the questionnaire regarding students' response on learning grammar items, it is clear that less than half of the participants selected short story whereas majority of the students selected

newspaper articles and essays to learn grammar. According to them, newspaper articles and essays follow a structure that is absent in short story and the genre is difficult for them to follow. From their responses it is found that, news articles are written for general people so that everybody can understand and it follows a simple and accurate structure. From this understanding, students preferred news articles and essays to learn grammar items. In contrast, according to students' point of view short story does not follow any strict structure or any definite rule and writers use colloquial language in their writing which is not very helpful to develop students' academic writing. Though majority of them preferred other materials a good number of responses were in favor of short story to learn grammar items. These students had put forward the logic that they could learn and understand tense from the reading without doing a lot of exercises, as in stories all types of tenses are used. Many students believe that short stories are a good source to acquire the grammar without focus on any particular rule that matches with Littlewood's (1986) affirmation that literature provides instances of language structure in use accompanied by a varying amount of grammatical analysis.

- **Reading skill:**

In case of reading skill, when they compared literary and non- literary texts to measure the most helpful material to improve their reading skill, over half of the class, 56% selected short story. In contrast, 36% of them selected newspaper and 8% of them selected essay that is shown below. Although students agreed that reading skill can be developed; when they compared the genre many of them preferred non- literary texts as well.

Table 6.2

Comparison amongst three different types of reading materials:

ITEMS	Newspaper article	Essays.	Short Stories
C. Which type of material was the most useful to improve your reading skill?	18 (36%)	4(8%)	28 (56%)

The above result actually coincides with question 7 where almost all the students agreed that literary texts were able to develop reading proficiency. However, 44 % selected newspaper and essays to improve reading, which students found easy to read and more informative. This points to the fact that a sizeable number of student is still uncomfortable with literature.

- **Creative thinking and imagination:**

To get students' view on which type of text allows students to go beyond the reading text, students were asked to measure three different reading materials. This question was asked to see how important students consider creativity or creative thinking while reading. The result shows that more than half of the participants perceived that short stories allowed them to be creative which is an essential element of being a successful language learner. It helps them to develop critical thinking as well that is confirmed by Chance (1986, cited in Alagozlu, 2007) in chapter 2 (p.23).

Table 6.3

Comparison amongst three different types of reading materials:

ITEMS	Newspaper article	Essays.	Short Stories
Which type of material allowed you to go beyond the reading passage?	11(22%)	5(10%)	34 (68%)

• **Motivation and emotional involvement:**

If students do not feel motivated to read any reading materials then it is a severe obstacle for overall language development. Keeping this point in mind, students were asked to make a comparison among three different reading materials to see which one was more motivating to read. The result shows that 76 % participants think that short stories are more motivating to read than other texts and only 24% selected newspaper as it provides current news and information. Followed by that, students were asked with which type of text they had greater emotional connection. It was found that short stories received the largest responses as students felt they were completely involved with the material while reading. This finding coincides with Duff and Maley's (2004) belief, literature has a genuine feeling that works as a powerful motivator. It is ascertained from the result that if reading materials are engaging and stimulating, where learners can share their emotional attachment, they will be automatically motivated to read and only then the learning will be fruitful. Not only emotional attachment, it also opens up the imagination at the same time as it develops learners' critical abilities. Lazar (1993) supports these findings. According to her, in language learning situation, literature can be helpful to stimulate the imagination of students to develop their critical abilities and to increase their emotional awareness. The result is shown below:

Table 6.4

Comparison amongst three different types of reading materials:

ITEMS		Newspaper article	Essays.	Short Stories
E	Which type of reading material was the most motivating to read?	12(24%)	0	38 (76%)
G	With which text were you completely absorbed emotionally?	0	0	50 (100%)

If we take a look at the summary of the result collected from this question shown in the figure below then it is evident that short stories are most appealing to the students as a reading material. Except for grammar, in all five items short stories have received highest number of votes from the participants.

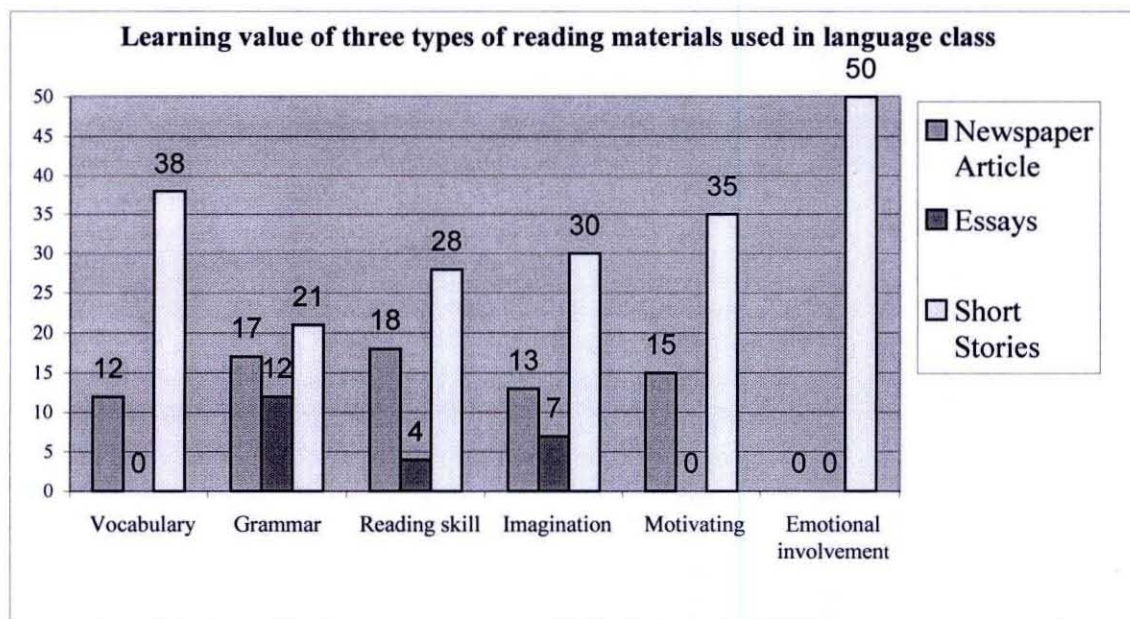


Figure 10: Learning value of three different types of reading materials

In terms of vocabulary learning, short story received a good number of votes that shows a sharp distinction among three different reading materials. It should be noted that

no one selected essays to learn vocabulary. In terms of learning grammar items, short story did not receive significant amount of vote compared to other two reading materials. In case of learning grammar, the votes given to the essay and newspaper were very close compared to short stories and the reasons had already been discussed. In fact, the difference was not highly distinctive which could be observed in the next item. In terms of reading skill, most students voted for short story, which they thought was most useful to improve their reading skill. Again a sharp distinction was observable where newspaper article got significant amount of vote compared to essays. In terms of motivation and emotional involvement short story alone received the majority of votes. It should be noted that all of the responses given to short stories were higher than the non- literary texts, which strongly indicate that according to students' view point the use of literary texts was more effective in facilitating overall language development. This trend squarely fits in with Langer's (1997) claim mentioned in chapter-2. (p.14)

Question 12, an open ended question, was designed to get students' overall perception on the use of literary texts in language classroom. In total 43 participants attempted this question and their responses was consistent with the other responses that has been collated and presented below in categories:

- **Overall language development:**

Most of the participants credited they learnt new vocabulary and its use in language. Besides vocabulary, for other language skills, like- speaking, reading and writing it was an effective tool to learn English. A good number of participants commented that the short story was a good reading material through which they could practice speaking and

writing as well. Many of them responded that the class discussion was really helpful for them as they thought of the situation that ultimately improved their capacity for understanding. Some of them even addressed the issue of learning grammar though they did not do any grammar exercise mentioned earlier. One such response was,

"I think reading short story is an active process of learning grammar. Automatically I was aware of the tense use when I was reading the text."

- **Cultural issue:**

Surprisingly, 4 participants out of 43 addressed the cultural issue of the literary texts in this section and for the researcher it was an insightful finding indeed. The story, *The Town by the Sea*, was set in India, which has a culture similar to Bangladesh. Because of that students did not confront any cultural barrier in the class. However, some of them really contemplated on the benefits of using literature in the language class and they shared that they were interested to know about others' cultures. Some parts of their responses are presented below:

'It's really effective, because, literature represents culture and tradition of a country and people and it also presents the actual language use.'

'Using literary texts are really useful for us. It not only improves the reading skill but also we can gather information about other cultures.'

- **Creativity, emotion and critical thinking:**

These participants were conscious about their language learning process that is reflected in their opinion. The majority of the participants were emotionally engaged with the particular story and commented that it was a useful reading material as they could match their emotion with the characters and they learnt new words to express their

feelings. Moreover, they shared that they got a scope to explore their own imagination that actually opened their mind. In other classes they only put forward facts without imagination. They also mentioned that this story let them think critically when they analyzed characters' actions for e.g. They felt confident while discussing as there were no right or wrong answer and that actually helped them to think. After doing all the activities, some students even had changed their views regarding literature and were highly enthusiastic about it. Some comments of the students are presented below:

"I don't like to read English story but after doing today's lesson my opinion has changed. It was a wonderful story. It allowed me to become creative when I wrote a reflection on the story."

"It was thought provoking and it made me think of the story. I was completely involved with story it was really an amazing story."

- **Enjoyment:**

Except for three students, all of them mentioned that they enjoyed reading the story. To some of them initially it was boring to read, but at the end they really liked the story. Many of them appreciated the use of literary texts in the class as it added a variety in the reading materials. As these students were the first semester students, many of them were very shy to talk in the class. As mentioned earlier, the speaking class was designed to assist students to remove that shyness and many of them acknowledged that they were now interested to talk in the class. From that perspective the short story could accomplish the learning objective of that lesson. A large portion of the participants remarked that they enjoyed reading the story as it touched their heart.

Although the majority of the students held a positive view towards literary texts, seven participants were not very happy with this reading material. They did not like the theme of the story, as it was sad. Moreover, they found it boring to read. Only a very small portion of the participants' perception on literary text was negative from which no definite conclusion can be drawn. The researcher was interested to know more about students' perception on this issue and she took interview to get an in-depth view of it.

4. 2 Analysis of interview:

A structured interview schedule containing six open-ended questions was designed to obtain a clear understanding about the use of literary text in the language lesson from students' perspective. In this section students are referred to S. Their responses are collated, categorized and analyzed below.

4.2.1 Students' perception concerning the level of involvement with the text:

The first question was asked to figure out students' level of enjoyment, which automatically leads to involvement with the text and they expressed their opinion regarding their experience of reading the story. The question was, ***Did you like to read the short story in your language class titled: The Town by the Sea? Why?***

In response to this question, six out of ten interviewees responded positively whereas three of them held a moderate view and one participant expressed negative view. According to S1 (Student 1) “ *It was interesting*” that is identical with other responses as well. However, when they explained their reasons it varied though not significantly.

According to the responses, the story was 'very touchy' as it depicted the life of a man who had encountered a disaster in his life and lost everyone except his son. As said by the students' expression, they could feel the unsaid pain of the character. They really contemplated on the story while reading. From this response it is apparent that as a readers they were completely engaged with the text. One of the participants said that the character's actions had directed the story into a different dimension that he enjoyed the most. One student was overwhelmed while reading the story. Some parts of the interview transcripts have been quoted below:

" I liked to read it. It has a different dimension, different point of view .the surrounding of the story gives an idea of the life style of the characters. " (S7)

" When I was reading, I recalled the scene that I had watched on TV 4 years back and tried to match the scene. The whole scene was very pathetic. I tried to match the actual scene with the story", (S1.)

Besides these strong views, three students held a moderate view. The following quotation signaled, why these three students did not like the story from the beginning.

" I liked the story, but in the beginning I felt bored. There were too many unknown words. In fact the story was sad." (S2)

However, all three of them acknowledged that at the end when the teacher and the other classmates discussed the story they found it interesting that is optimistic indeed. On the other hand, one participant responded negatively as for him it *was* too difficult to understand as he had found too many unknown words and after a while he lost patience.

From the above data, it can be interpreted that the majority of the students were emotionally involved and they enjoyed reading this story as it contains different viewpoints of the characters. This finding is in keeping with Smagorinsky's (1990)

thought mentioned in chapter 2 , where he suggests that students should read literature that involves the consideration and integration of a variety of viewpoints and requires students to project consequences and alternatives. From the data it is also found that, careful selection of the story will promote successful learning in the class. The theme should be familiar to them. From the responses it was evident that the selection of the story was appropriate for their level and they enjoyed the class. However, only one student strongly opposed that he did not like the story. This response emerged as vocabulary was the main barrier for him. When he was asked to guess the meaning from the context, he could not even do that which eventually led him to dislike the story.

4.2.2: Students' opinion regarding the activities:

The second question was asked to probe students' view on communicative activities based on the literary text. The question was, “ *From your experience of reading short story which activity did you enjoy most? Why*”

Almost all the participants answered that they liked the discussion part of the lesson most. According to the lesson plan, there was a group discussion after reading the story the students got the opportunity to express their opinion and feelings toward the story. These participants felt confident while discussing as they could share their opinion and the whole class was directed toward them. Here they interpreted the story and justified their opinion on the characters' action.

Not only that, students found reading this story interesting because they could relate their life with that of the character. Besides discussion, four participants highlighted that they enjoyed the writing task where they had changed the ending of the

story. The enjoyment of imagination in literature has been pointed out by Lazar (1993) mentioned in chapter 2. Some of their responses are given below:

"I could comment on writers actions whether he was right or wrong, or , how an action of the main character of the story could change the whole story, etc....here I shared my opinion with my teacher and group members. We changed the ending of the story and made up our own story in a group". (S4)

"When my teacher invited me to comment on the main character's action- what is my opinion- I really felt good and could share my feeling with the rest of the class". (S7)

Apart from positive views, two students came up with different opinions. One of them said, *"it was a sad story and the activities were not very interesting."* They did not like the story, as the context was sad. The other participant said, *"I didn't understand the overall meaning"* as there were too many difficult words and they felt bored.

From the above data it can be commented that when students get the chance to express themselves, they automatically participate in the class. The group discussion, in particular allowed the students to go beyond the text. This finding actually matches with Mink's (1990) claim where he advocated that discussion in groups of five or six students force the students to become active participants in the learning process as students seated in circles help each other to make sense of the text (see chapter 2, pg-31). These participants felt confident while discussing which indicates that when students feel they are empowered within the class and connected with the text, they automatically respond to class activity. Apart from the group discussion, they also liked the writing task where they got the opportunity to explore their imagination. Another important finding from this question is that students found reading this story interesting because they could relate

their life with that of the character, which is the major strength of using short story in the language class and the students also realized this connection.

4.2.3. Students' perception on the difference between literary and non- literary texts:

The third question was asked to explore students' understanding of the differences between literary and non- literary texts, which influence the overall learning process. The findings are quite interesting. The question was - ***Do you think literary texts are very different from non- literary texts?***

The responses to this question are almost similar where the participants have figured out some common differences. According to them, non- literary texts are formal writing that maintain grammar, follow a structure, provide information and use refined language. On the other hand, according to the students, literary texts are informal writing where grammar is not always followed strictly. Writers use literary words that are not very common and readers have to infer the meaning of the texts as it contains implied meaning. Literary text touches the heart of the reader whereas non- literary text contains logic that doesn't establish any emotional attachment with the reader. Participants pointed out that, short story is comparatively lengthy and takes time to read. They also figured out that, short story contains a plot, a setting and a turning point that arouses their interest. Their responses also highlight that the non- literary texts like newspaper are targeted for common people containing easy words, whereas literary texts contains more difficult words. Another interesting finding is that to many of the participants, writers subtly leave social messages to the reader through the actions of the character that they

liked most, which in the end help learners to shape their attitude towards life. One such response was,

"From short story or novel we can get information at the same time it conveys social message which is important to develop our thinking skill."

Some of their responses are given below:

"Yes, they are different; articles are more formal whereas, short stories are very informal, it's the story of people which is more amusing to read. For example- news articles have similar type of heading and its always same just information.....i don't like to read that. Essays are also same. Sometimes it's too difficult to understand." (S7)

"Yeah!! Absolutely...structure wise they are different. Non-literary texts use refined language with proper structure and the meaning is pretty clear. But in literary texts writers use symbolic language, which is difficult for me to understand, as I'm not very good in English." (S9)

"In stories grammar is not always followed which is followed in a formal writing like essay, newspaper don't follow the structure properly as in our real life we don't always say something structure wise." (S10)

From the data, it is clear that students were able to find out the difference of literary and non-literary texts and those who supported short stories were aware of the writing style that Spack (1985) has advocated mentioned in chapter 2 (p.13) It is obvious that students have a mixed feeling towards literary and non-literary texts. Though a major part of the participants enjoy reading short stories, for academic reading and writing a good number of people prefer reading other materials. Some of them prefer news articles and essays that contain formal grammar structure and are easy to follow, as writers of these materials do not use complex structure much compared to literary texts. Another major difference is the implied meaning that is found mostly in literary texts mentioned by the participants, which also creates problem to understand the overall meaning of the text.

4.2.4. Students' response on motivation:

To measure students' motivation while reading short stories, the researcher asked the participants, *"Which type of reading materials used in your class have you found more motivating to read? Why?"*

All the participants except two responded positively. The most common response was *"I found short story more interesting."* They find it motivating as it has a twist and an ending, which readers can't always predict how the writer is going to end it. They also point out that short stories are more motivating as it speaks for them. One participant even said that while reading, her *"inner self"* comes out that had inspired her to take part in class discussion. According to the responses short stories are more motivating as readers feel a kind of emotional attachment with the text at the same time they are able to see different personalities created by the writers, which is fascinating to read. Some of their responses are presented below:

"We can understand how a person can be so different from what we perceive. The characters are the writer's creation. They create different personality." (S3).

"Of course, short story is more motivating. It is very much related with our normal life. We can feel that we are the character of the story. With formal writing we don't feel any kind of attachment". (S5)

"I found short story more interesting, as there is no right and wrong answer. I can say from my point of view. We don't get that chance in other materials." (S4)

In contrast to all these positive responses, two participants considered that news articles are more motivating to read as the topic is contemporary and will develop their

academic reading. It is informative and they can use it in other major courses. One such response is ,

"I found non- literary text more motivating to read as it contains information. It helps me to develop my academic reading." (S9)

The major finding of this question was majority of the participants undoubtedly agreed that short story was more motivating to read than other materials. Some of them even admitted that this story actually made them talk, which was the main aim of the speaking class. Regarding the emotional attachment with the text found from students' response, Nolan (1990) expressed his view that literature makes us feel the plight of people caught up in a particular problem and it puts us vicariously and emotionally in a situation the characters are struggling with and therefore helps us to understand the author's vision of life.

4.2.5. Students' preference of materials to improve reading skill:

To investigate students' preference of reading material the researcher asked a fifth question that would help to understand whether students want literary texts as a reading materials in their English classes or not. The question was, *"Which type of materials like- newspaper article, essays, and short stories do you prefer to improve your reading skill? Why?"*

Six out of ten participants strongly believed that short story would improve their skill because,

" It is comparatively long and I need to read it carefully to understand the context. Sometimes, meaning is not very clear to me. It has underlying meaning." (S1)

This response indicates that understanding underlying meaning of a text is an important skill to develop, which is present in short story as writers craft the story. The significant finding is that all of them admitted that they have poor reading skill in English. One participant said,

"I think short stories will be the most effective tool to improve my reading skill. I know I have a poor reading skill and I don't understand what the writer meansits not always clear to me. That's why I will choose more short stories to read." (S4)

One of them found reading newspaper articles boring and for her to improve reading skill short story is the best option. She answered,

"I will prefer short story to read. If It's interesting to read then only I will read it otherwise it's really difficult to read in English. Newspaper articles are boring to read, it has nothing interesting... ..accept entertainment section. Its very formal." (S5)

Students do not always like the formality of other types of reading materials with which they cannot connect themselves. On the other hand, short story allows a reader to explore the world around the readers that is preferred by most of the students. One such response was , *"Definitely short stories as I feel connected with the text." (S 10)*

Apart from six students, others have shared a mixed response. One of them answered,

"I think all of them are helpful. So far to improve reading I've read essays, which were difficult for me to understand. That's why I don't like to read essay. I read newspaper a lot, which is easy to understand. I'm not sure about short stories as I don't have much experience of reading it in English." (S 6)

One student even commented, *"I like to read newspaper to improve my reading skill as it doesn't take much time to understand and it gives me latest information" (S 2).*

The responses to this question were not uniform. These responses signaled that students do not want to spend much time on reading English materials. In fact, before coming to the university, most of them did not read any short story in their English classes to develop their reading skill that is found from the questionnaire response. To them, reading newspaper is easier to understand and it keeps them updated about the current news, which they can use in their other classes as well. However, except one, none of them strongly dislikes short story though they prefer other reading materials as well.

“ I like to read newspaper article as it is easy to read and I can use the facts in my other classes as well. At the same time I like to read short stories as well. It gives me pleasure. It's a kind of mental relaxation to me.” (S3)

This answer resembled with S 8's response as well. However, only one students strongly said,

“Obviously I'll prefer essays as these are short and it will serve two purposes, I will improve my reading at the same time I'll learn how to structure my academic writing.” (S 9).

This response implies that he is more concerned with his academic reading that is found in essays only.

4.2.6: Students' perception on development of language skills through short story:

One last question was asked to investigate students' opinion on the overall language development after completing the literary text based lesson. The answers were resourceful for the researcher to match the learning objective with the outcome. The question was, *“What language skills can be learnt best through reading short stories?”*

- **Speaking skill:**

Many participants highlighted that the speaking skill could be developed through short story as it allowed them to comment on the writing. In class they got an opportunity to share their thoughts. This finding is significant as this lesson was a part of the speaking class and majority of the participants agreed that it helped them to speak out. Not only that, they learnt some social language that they could use it in their speech while discussing within group. This point is interesting because students are making a connection between input and speaking. Some of the responses are given below:

"I think our speaking skill developed a lot as we discussed the story in group. It was really effective when we shared our thoughts." (S1)

"Speaking skill can also be developed through class discussion as we did. In story real life expressions are used that we can use in our speech. I've tried to use some expressions that I've learnt from the story. (S6)

- **Writing skill:**

As these participants did one writing activity based on the story they found it effective to develop their writing skill as well, though it was a speaking class. One participant said, *"Writing skill can be developed as well. We changed the ending of the story, which I liked most. Here we had more freedom to express ourselves" (S1)*, which echoes another response, *" My writing skill can also be developed as we did one writing task based on this story. " (S6)*. One participant even thinks that *"I think reading and writing can be developed the most. "(S7)*

- **Reading and comprehension skill:**

Almost all the participants indicated that short story developed their reading skill. To understand the story completely they had to read it with concentration. Followed by the reading there were some comprehension questions that they had discussed in the class and to do that activity they had to understand the underlying meaning of the text. Only surface meaning was not enough to express their thoughts that ultimately developed their comprehension skill as well. Some parts of their responses are presented below:

“Reading comprehension skill can also be learnt. When we read the story we took time to understand it.” (S 3).

“Obviously, reading skill because when we read we need to pay full concentration to understand the story” (S4)

“ To understand the story completely, I need to think what the writing is trying to say...that is not said clearly, as a reader we have to find out what the writers are trying to say.” (S7)

One interesting response was, *“Reading can be developed. But to me it will help me to develop my creative thinking though I haven’t tried it. In that case it has to be very interesting reading not like the one we did in the class. It was a bit boring.” (S9)* To him, the story was not interesting to read and it did not help him much and from this response we should not draw any conclusion as among ten participants only one gave a negative response always.

- **Vocabulary:**

When this question was asked the first answer was they could learn a lot of vocabulary. Eight participants agreed on this point and their responses are quite similar. One major point is while reading initially they wanted to know the exact meaning of the word. However, when their teachers guided them , they started to guess the meaning from the context, which in the end helped them to understand the meaning. In this way they

could practice vocabulary. It was a problem for them as they are very dependent on the dictionary. On the other hand, two students found it difficult to learn vocabulary from the story as their guess did not match with actual meaning. They had to look up the glossary or the dictionary at the end of the lesson. Their responses are presented below:

"I guessed the meaning from the text. Then again I found it difficult. Then I looked into the glossary at the back of the text." (S4)

I'm not sure about the vocabulary as I can't guess the meaning from the context. Most of the time I am wrong. I have to look up the word in the dictionary. (S6)

To sum up, data collected from both quantitative and qualitative indicate that students' attitude towards overall language development by using literary texts was positive. The majority of the students were convinced about the benefits of using literature in the language classroom. They found it motivating, enjoyable and effective for language development. The major findings of the study are discussed below to confirm the research hypotheses.

4.3 Major Findings and discussion:

This study aimed at exploring the students' attitude towards learning English through literary texts, namely short stories in a tertiary level ESL class. Firstly, the data collected from the questionnaire revealed that majority of the students do not have much reading habit in English. Most of them read only those materials that teacher provide them in class so that they can complete class activity. Though many students have mentioned that they read for pleasure, at the same time they have selected other options. So, reading for pleasure was not the sole choice. A good number of them read English

materials provided by the teacher just to pass the course where no enjoyment is involved. They are not accustomed to read long texts in English. The questionnaire result shows that majority of the participants do not have any experience of reading literary texts. This is representative of our education system where students are used to reading short extracts mostly non- literary texts. However, the findings of the questionnaire and the interview signify that majority of the participants have a positive attitude toward reading literary texts in language classroom. When they were asked to choose genres, majority of the participants selected both short story and drama and justified their reasons behind selecting a particular genre. It was found that students had fairly an optimistic view towards literary texts as they commented that their reading skills could be enhanced through short story and drama.

A major finding of data analyzed from both quantitative and qualitative indicate that almost all of the participants think that literary texts are useful resource to improve their reading skill, to enrich vocabulary, to learn actual use of target language and to learn common expression used in everyday life. Nevertheless, how literary texts can be used to learn grammar was not clear to them. Apart from this grammar learning, in terms of vocabulary all the participants mentioned the same view and they found literary texts as the best resource to learn new words in context, which eventually helped them to learn the actual usage of the language in different context as well. In class, while reading, teacher and students discussed the difficult words that helped the students to understand the meaning of the text, even though those words were unfamiliar to them. This result is consistent in both quantitative and qualitative analysis that finally matches with the first hypothesis 'Literary texts are a good source to enrich vocabulary'.

Results found from interview highlight that literary texts are extremely helpful for the students to improve their speaking and comprehension skill as well. After reading the texts students discussed the comprehension questions in-group and they shared their views with the class where they could utilize their prior knowledge on the topic. They thought it was a good practice to promote their speaking skill. During class discussion, students found that people had different points of view and to establish their own thoughts they felt they should speak out. Eventually, students were emotionally connected with the reading and they started to analyze the characters. They were completely engaged with the reading and they could understand the underlying meaning of the character's speech through group discussion, which is certainly a good sign. Majority of the students acknowledged that they were not forced to talk rather they automatically participated in the class discussion, which was a major challenge for the class as it was a part of speaking class. Another finding is in this story they did not confront any foreign culture, so lack of schema was not a problem and students could comprehend. These findings correspond with the second hypothesis which says, 'Literary texts will develop students' reading comprehension skill.' At the same time it will accommodate students' speaking skill and enrich their vocabulary with minimum language anxiety.

In terms of motivation, both qualitative and quantitative results show a mixed response. Most of the students mentioned that literary texts were motivating to read. They could identify the text by relating it to their own life. However, a good number of

students differed with this view when they compared it with non-literary texts. They found non-literary texts motivating to read in terms of its usefulness. Students mentioned news articles were informative; they could keep themselves updated about the recent news, which they could use in their major subjects as well. In this way it would serve two purposes. A small portion of the respondent was more interested to develop their academic reading and writing. From that point of view they prefer formal reading. On the other hand, the majority of the students indicated that, short stories were more motivating than the formal writing where the activity gave them a space to express their own thoughts. It was stimulating for them to read and many shy students had started talking after reading this story in the class and in the interview some students actually admitted this fact. From that perspective, the third hypothesis is also confirmed though not completely which says, 'Literary texts motivate learners to read and participate in class.' Yes, it motivates them to participate, however, it is not confirmed whether it motivates them to read "actively" in the class or not.

It should be noted that before this literary text based lesson this particular group had no experience of doing any communicative activity based on literary texts. From that perspective, the questionnaire and interview findings were quite encouraging. When participants' general perceptions towards literary texts were investigated, it was found that, without doing any kind of grammar exercise from the reading, they realized that grammar points could be learnt. When they answered one open ended question, they themselves came up with examples of grammar points that could be learnt from literary texts, like – direct and indirect speech, tense, complex sentence structure etc., which was

certainly a major finding even though almost half of participants were neutral on this point. This view changed slightly when they compared other reading materials with short story to develop grammar knowledge. A significant number of participants reflected that newspaper articles and essays were also very useful to develop grammar points as they thought, writers followed a formal structure from which grammar point could be learnt easily compared to short story where grammar points were not strictly followed by the writers. This finding indicates that grammar points can be learnt through literary texts; however, students prefer more organized writing to learn grammar. It is also found that the use of short stories was very effective in stimulating students' writing skills where they got an opportunity to nurture their creativity and imagination. In case of creativity and imagination short story had received the largest number of positive responses. In class, as part of the writing activity they had changed the ending of the story and wrote one page response paper. It served two purposes. Firstly, in the changing the end activity, students used their creativity and imagination. Secondly, in the response paper they critically analyzed the story and commented, which therefore guided them to write structured paragraph. The objective of the class was met at the end of the lesson as they started talking in the class. They also liked the vocabulary guessing activity while reading the texts. Some of them expressed that speaking can be improved as literary texts contain natural expression, which they can use in their daily life. Therefore, material developers should look for such type of story that will contain enough direct speech and natural expressions through which students will get an exposure to different situations of our life. These findings reveal that appropriate input and various activities, which suit the interest of the students' is the key factors to motivate students to read literary texts. From the

above discussion it is evident that the fourth hypothesis is also true for language learners that is, "Literary texts develop learners' creativity and imagination."

So far all the discussions have indicated that all the four skills including comprehension skill can be developed through literary texts as it provides vocabulary usage with complex sentence structure. If the learners do 'aesthetic reading', suggested by Rosenblatt (1978; cited in : Takagaki) (see chapter 2, p.21) it will develop students' comprehension and analytical skill and the majority of the students mentioned it in both qualitative and quantitative response. When students were invited to comment on the use of literary text the majority was really enthusiastic from which it can be claimed that students understood how the use of literary text could develop their overall language proficiency . In this particular lesson all the skills were integrated though not proportionately, it can be claimed that the fifth hypothesis 'Literary texts leave room for overall development' is also true. If students and teachers both are enthusiastic and want to take up a challenge, then unquestionably literary texts can be the best resource to design a variety of activities.

From the above discussion, it is found that all four hypotheses are confirmed from students' perception. On the other hand, the third hypothesis is partially true though not completely. In this regard students have a mixed feeling. Many of them prefer non- literary texts in terms of its usefulness and a good number of them prefer literary texts that add variety in the reading and make the class enjoyable.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION

In this chapter, summary of the findings, recommendations, limitations and conclusion of the research will be discussed.

5.1. Summary of the major findings:

This present study was aimed at investigating students' perception of using literary texts in the language classroom and the result was rather encouraging despite the fact that students were not very familiar with literary texts in English. From the data collected in this study and analyzed in Chapter four of the paper, it was found that English reading lessons through literary texts provided an enjoyable and productive learning experience for the students, which in turn motivated students to read and to participate in the class room activities. Majority of the students gave quite positive feedbacks where they reflected short stories could be the best material to learn new words and social language. They found the reading material favorable and the tasks allowed them to communicate with their peers. From this finding it can be confirmed that if students get suitable reading material they will read it without teachers' pressure. Another important finding from the students' perspective was literary text based activity was effective in developing their critical thinking skill. In case of grammar learning a good number of students were not sure about how literary texts could help them to learn grammar learning as they did not do any activity based on the story. However, a significant number of students were really thoughtful about this point and suggested what grammar items could be learnt that was obviously a major finding of the study. Students

reflected that their speaking and writing skills were emphasized that involved imagination and critical thinking. In terms of motivation the study showed a mixed result. Fairly a good number of students strongly held to the view that non-literary texts were motivating to read in terms of its usefulness. They thought that literary texts were enjoyable but it was not enough to motivate them to develop academic reading and writing. Therefore, it is important to gradually instill the belief in the students that literary texts can also help their academic learning of the language effectively through various activities but in a pleasurable way. From the above discussion, if we consider majority's view, it can be said that students want literary texts in their language classroom as they themselves have realized the importance of it.

5.2 Recommendations:

In this study it is found that the majority is interested to read literary texts if it is appropriate and matches with their interest. Curriculum and material developers can take students' preference into account to produce a dynamic syllabus incorporating literary texts with other reading materials, which are at the heart of the syllabus, to ensure successful language learning process. Students' feedback indicated that the incorporation of the discussion activity really assisted them to open up in the class. However, some students reported that the story was slightly boring and too lengthy. In order to make this lesson a success, teacher should be more careful while selecting the story for a group of learners. Perhaps a story with a happy ending would be appropriate for them. In addition, young adult literature can be a good option that Bushman (1993) has suggested. It will be stimulating for them to read fiction about their age group.

The suitability of the activities is closely related to the selection of materials and the level of difficulty of the tasks. The discussion activity was a success; however, role playing activity can be included to promote speaking where they will get a scope to demonstrate their emotion while speaking. Apart from speaking, it will be exceedingly helpful for the learners if grammar points can be included within the lesson. Teachers can incorporate at least one or two grammar items that are used in the texts so that from the reading students will get the use of that grammar item and they will be able to solve language problems related to those examples. Many scholars claim that literature promotes overall language development, which will be true if all the skills are integrated within one text. The activities should be more contextualized, which is the essence of successful learning. Learning grammar in isolation does not help students much if they do not see the language in use. From that standpoint, literary texts are the best source of language in use. To make the class lively, some while- reading activity can be included, for instance – multiple choice questions can be included to check their comprehension and inference skill. Activities can be designed to check students' vocabulary that they already know and new ones that they have learnt from the text.

Besides short story, in language syllabus other genres of literature should be included. In fact, when students were asked to select different genres for their class a large number of them selected drama and poetry as well, so these can be incorporated. Different genres facilitate students' development in different areas of English learning and their horizons can be broadened. However, as mentioned by some of the students, literary texts should not contain too many difficult words that hamper smooth reading.

Teacher should be careful while selecting stories for one particular level. Syllabus designer should be careful about the selection as well as the number of lessons. If students have to read too many stories within one month they will lose interest. In order to sustain students' interest and motivation in learning, the use of literary text should serve as stimulant to vary the normal lesson. In addition, students should get a chance to select literary texts from their own interest. They can bring it in class to get the majority's opinion and after that teacher can design activities around the text. Then students will be more responsible and will be interested in language class. In the particular lesson, students did not face any cultural barrier as the story had a sub-continental context, almost similar with our culture. Teacher can also include stories from other countries to see the reaction of the students when confronted with foreign culture. It will help them to visualize others life style that will contribute to their personal development. Last but not least, it is also worth helping learners to keep their own learning journals to make a record of what is learnt every time from a particular class. Learners should be encouraged to keep a learning journal to record the things that they have learnt and the activities that they have done. It is also hoped that the habit of using learning journals will pave the way for their autonomous learning and they would hopefully become independent learners of the language.

5.3 Limitations of the Study:

As the research aims at investigating students' general perception towards using literary texts in language classroom, both quantitative and qualitative research methods were used. In case of qualitative method only ten participants were selected randomly to

collect data, which is a very small sample size, a major limitation of the study. Moreover, it was difficult for the students to manage time to come for the interview, which was why the duration of each interview was very short. Therefore the findings from qualitative data are tentative and cannot be representative. Any conclusion drawn is subject to confirmation by further studies. The second major limitation of the study is, the major focus was only on short story, other types of literary texts were not investigated. Therefore if we want to bring back literary texts in the language classroom then this investigation of students' perception on short story is not enough. Research should be done on other types of literary texts as well. Because of time constraints, the researcher did not focus on other genres. Thirdly, as mentioned earlier, the genre of short story was more popular than the non- literary texts used in the class in terms of fostering students' reading skill, vocabulary expansion, speaking, creativity and imagination. However, it is not confirmed that students will be able to use those words in their writing as no vocabulary based post reading activity was conducted. Moreover, they did not do any grammar practice based on the story. In the questionnaire students indicated that grammar points could be learnt, though no grammar exercise was used. Therefore, it was not confirmed whether it would actually help them to develop grammar or not another major limitation of the study. In this case, it was difficult to measure students' overall learning development. The fourth limitation is these participants were new in the university and they were not very familiar with the type of activities that had been employed around the literary text, which was appealing to them. Nevertheless, it was not tested whether they would have the same motivation if at least two more stories were taught or other genres were used in the class. It is, therefore, advisable to conduct the

same type of studies where at least three short stories or other literary texts are used within one timeframe. In this way, it is believed that a more sustainable effect and more reliable findings can be obtained. Most importantly, the students will have more time to experience and reflect on the benefits of using literary texts in the language class when they will read a variety of literary texts.

5.4. Recommendations for Further Studies:

If more time is available, it is worth conducting a longitudinal study over a year together to find out how different the students perform in terms of language proficiency, creativity and imagination, with the immersion of literary texts in language learning. In future grammar can be included and it can be studied whether literary texts actually promote grammar learning or not. In this study, the students responded very positively towards the use of short story. However, no play was used though students had a preference for it. It was found that students thought drama would be more engaging and interactive. It will, therefore, be interesting to find out whether and how students' communicative competence can be improved through the incorporation of plays in the language classroom.

In conclusion, the investigation has opened up a new area for exploration in English language teaching situation for any classroom context. Results obtained from the study are highly satisfactory and it will be beneficial if implemented at any level of English learning though this study was targeted to introduce literary texts in intermediate

and tertiary level. The underlying hypotheses of this study are confirmed from students' perceptions who are the ultimate subject of the learning process. To them both productive (speaking , writing) and receptive(reading) skills can be developed through literary texts as they leave room for overall language development. From students' perspective it has been established that imagination and creativity are the salient part of language learning that can be best achieved through literary texts. This is a continuous process where learners will subconsciously learn the structure of English language through group discussion and interaction with the text and eventually their vocabulary will be enriched in due course of time. This is also the most appealing way to promote life-long and autonomous English language learning. Therefore, literary texts should be brought back in language classroom to facilitate more effective language learning from students' perception.

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Appendix A

March 2, 2009

To
The Director
Centre for Languages (CfL)
BRAC University
66, Mohakhali, Dhaka.

Subject: Request for permission to ask student participation in a graduate research study entitled “Do we need literary texts in our language classroom? An investigation on students’ perception.”

Dear Madam,

I am Samia Zerine (ID# 07263012) an MA in Applied Linguistics and ELT student at BRAC University, Dhaka. Currently, I am undertaking research for my dissertation paper on “Do we need literary texts in our language classroom? An investigation on students’ perceptions.” As part of my study, I will be conducting a survey on the students of module 3 of your department in the form of a questionnaire to get an idea of their attitudes towards using literary texts in language classroom. As CfL is a language institute, it is the best possible field to investigate students’ perception on different reading materials used in a language class. I would be very thankful if you allow me to conduct this study at your department, as I hope that through my research, at all level in Bangladesh, English language-teaching situation would be positively improved.

The identities of all the participants in this study will be kept anonymous. I have included twelve items in the questionnaire that at least 50 students will fill up. I also wish to take interview of ten students of module 3 as a part of my study. The study is being conducted under the supervision of Zerine Alam, Associate Professor, Department of English, Dhaka University, who can be contacted by phone: 9345877. Thank you for your co-operation.

Sincerely Yours,

Samia Zerine
Tel: 01552329643
e-mail- samiazerine7@gmail.com

Appendix B---Course Delivery Plan

Week	Speaking and Comprehension skill
1	Ice Breaking: Getting to know each other
	A mysterious letter
2	Drama presentation on A Mysterious Letter
	Drama presentation on A Mysterious Letter
3	Describing person: Appearance and character
	Describing person: Adjectives
4	Annotation
	Summary: The New horizon
5	Speech organization
	Speech : I Have a Dream: Dr. Martin Luther King
6	Mid term
7	Natural disaster: Tsunami
	Short story: The Town By the Sea
8	The Town by the Sea
	Argumentation
9	Short Story : To Rise Above
	Story: To Rise Above
10	Argumentation : Presentation Skill
11	Final presentation
12	Final presentation
13	Revision

Appendix C-Lesson Plan

SPRING 2009

SKILL: SPEAKING/LISTENING

WEEK 8 (CLASS 1,2& 3)

MODULE – 3

Instructor: Tahreen Ahmed

Topic: Learning language through literature

Main Aim:

- Ss learn language through reading a short literary text.
- Ss learn to express themselves about their thoughts of the text.

Objectives:

- Ss talk about natural disasters such as tsunamis and floods.
- Ss look at pictures of natural disasters and describe those using adjectives and offer their thoughts about them.
- Ss read a short story by Amitav Ghosh – *A Town By The Sea*. They will learn new vocabulary and do comprehension questions on the story. They will discuss the story and talk about human loss and what they think of the story.
- Ss will change the ending of the story and write a reflection of what they thought of the story and present it in front of the class.

Anticipated Problems: Ss may have problem with vocabulary.

Solutions: Teacher explains with examples.

First Class

Step & Time	Teacher Activity	Student Activity	Aids
Step 1 10 minutes	Teacher takes attendance		
Step 2 10 min	Teacher holds up some pictures of devastation after a natural disaster and asks Students to describe them using	Students describe pictures of natural disasters and use	Photocopy of pictures found in

	adjectives. Teacher may extend the discussion by asking Ss about a recent disaster that took place in Bangladesh-cyclone Sider.	adjectives.	teacher's notes.
Step 3 20 min	Teacher asks Ss if they know what a Tsunami is. T can write the word on the board and then start a discussion about the Tsunami that hit South Asia at the end of 2004. T then tells Ss that they are going to take a short quiz about Tsunamis. T tells Ss to turn to their Booklet pg. 145. After Ss have finished the quiz, the Teacher reads out the passage which the quiz is based on. Ss will check their answers while Teacher reads out the passage. If needed T may read it out a second time.	Ss respond and talk about what they remember of the Tsunami of 2004. Ss take the quiz and then listen to the listening and check their answers.	Board, Marker, Quiz-Booklet pg. 145. Listening passage – <i>Tsunami</i> (will be read out by the teacher). In teacher's notes.
Step 4 20 min	T tells Ss that they are going to read a short story about a real-life account of the destruction of the 2004 Tsunami, especially the destruction caused in the Andaman and Nicobar islands in India. T tells Ss to turn to pg. 146 of their Booklet and to the short story <i>A Town by the Sea</i> . T shows Ss the map of the islands on pg. 148 to explain where they are located. T tells Ss to silently read the story up to the end of ph. 148. T then asks Ss questions about the story and what is happening in the plot. T also play guessing game with the unfamiliar words with such as: <i>Director, Malaca, trickled, reluctance, rafters, splinters, flailing, canopy, obliterate</i> . But teacher will not tell the meaning directly.	Ss listen to the Teacher explain about the Tsunami of 2004 that hit South Asia and then they will read the first part of the short story. They will give a summary of the plot and offer their thoughts on what has happened so far in the story (up to pg. 146). Ss find out the meaning of the word from the context and learn new vocabulary.	Booklet – <i>A Town by the Sea</i> by Amitav Ghosh – pg. 146-152.
Step 5 30 min	Teacher will form groups amongst the students. They will discuss the comprehension questions 1-4 on pg. 152 in group. T then elicits answers from students. This will be continued in the second class.	Ss discuss in pairs and write answers to questions on pg. 152, Q 1-4. Ss orally share their answers with the class.	Comprehensi on questions- Booklet pg. 152

Second Class

Step & Time	Teacher Activity	Student Activity	Aids
Step 1 10 min	Attendance		
Step 2 40 min	<p>Teacher elicits information on the story and asks ss to read the rest of the short story.</p> <p>T again goes over some of the unknown vocabulary such as: <i>darted away, rank, looted, vindication, brusquely, demeanour unsavored, desolation, futile.</i></p> <p>T elicits opinions from Ss about what they thought about the story and asks them to explain themselves. T ask Ss about the main theme of the story – <i>life is precious; you never know when it will be taken away from you, so you should appreciate your life and your loved ones.</i></p> <p>T should also read out the last two paragraphs of the story and ask Ss what the writer meant and their feelings towards it.</p>	Ss give responses to Teacher's questions and offer their thoughts about the story in whole class discussion. Ss learn new vocabulary.	Booklet pg. 149-151
Step 3 30 min	Teacher divides the class into the same pairs as the previous class and tells Ss to discuss and write the answers to the rest of the comprehension questions on pg. 152, Q 5,7,8,9.	Ss work in pairs on questions and come up with the answers	Booklet pg. 152
Step 4 30 min	T goes over the answers of the comprehension questions and discuss	Ss give the answers to comprehension questions orally.	
H.W	T tells Ss to write a reflection on the story they have read and submit it in the following week. T will check it and give feedback on the paper. In class, if there is time, Ss can start their reflections.		

Third Class

Step & Time	Teacher Activity	Student Activity	Aids
Step 1 10 min	Attendance		
Step 2 15 min	Teacher will discuss the story in general and ask whether students liked the ending of the story or not, feelings towards the ending.	Ss give responses regarding the ending of the story..	
Step 3 35 min	Teacher divides the class into pairs and asks them to change the ending of the story. They also need to justify their change of the ending.	Ss work in pairs on the ending of the story	
Step 4 40 min	T calls each pair to come in front and share their stories with the whole class.	Ss orally say their own story.	

Appendix D- The Town by the Sea

4	Listening	: For specific information
	Reading	: For details
	Vocabulary	: Meanings of confusing words
	Study Skills	: Summarizing
	Writing	: News reports and feature articles
	Speaking	: Debating

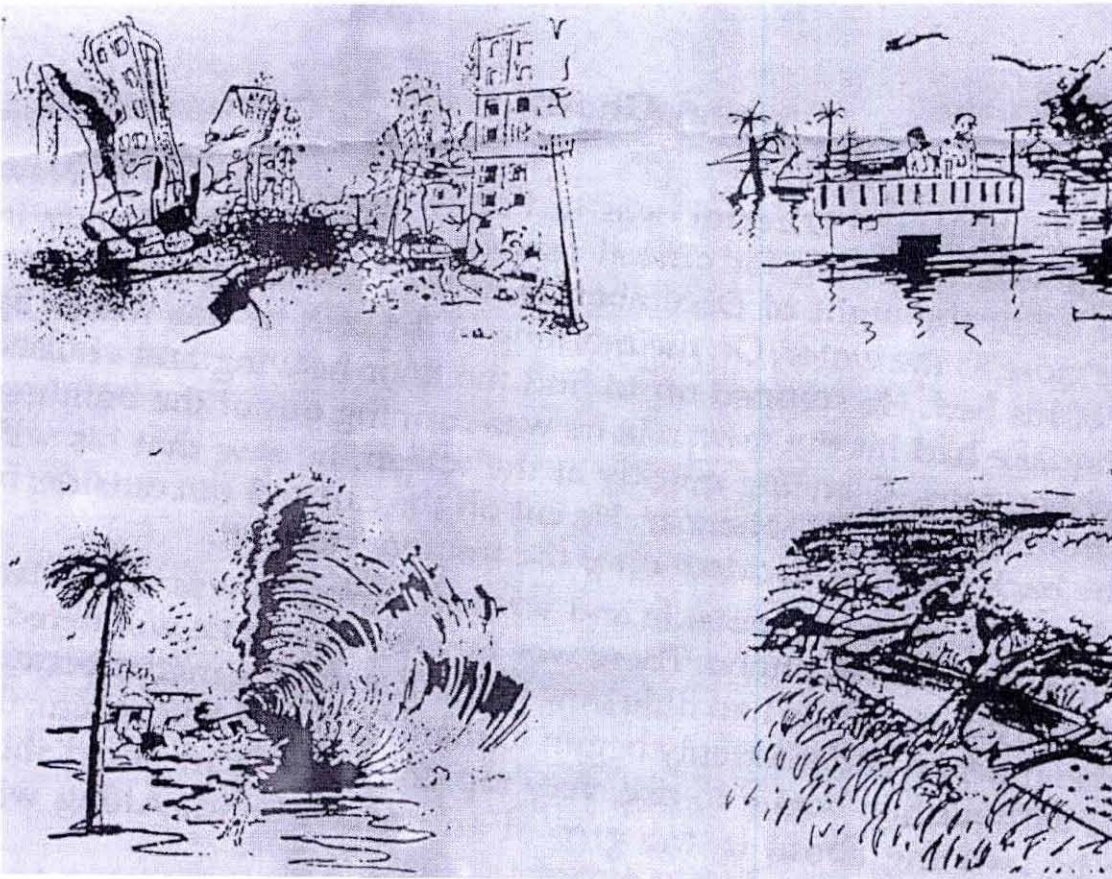
The Town by the Sea

WARM UP

Do you remember the disaster that struck the coastal region of south India on 2nd December 2004? What are the details you remember about that day?

Look at the following pictures. They show scenes of various natural calamities.

Make a list of the words/expressions you would use to describe these natural disasters.



Hardly anyone in India had heard the word 'tsunami' before 26 December 2004. On that fateful Sunday morning, huge tidal waves caused by a massive earthquake swept away thousands of unsuspecting men, women and children from the coastal areas of southern India and the Andaman and Nicobar islands. Other countries like Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Maldives were also hit badly. The death and destruction was so vast that most people the world over spent the night of 31 December 2004 not celebrating the arrival of a new year, but in prayers.

The Town by the Sea

Amitav Ghosh

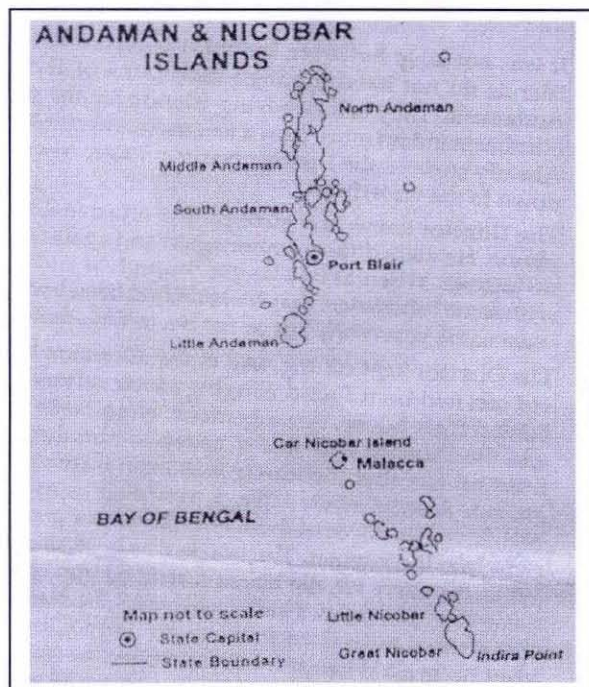
On December 25, 2004, the Director was in Port Blair, on his way to New Delhi. Since he was traveling for official reasons, he had left his family in Malacca. He spent the night of December 25 in the Haddo Circuit House, which stands close to the water. On the morning of the 26th he was woken by the shaking of his bed. He stepped off to ding the floor heaving and realized that an earthquake had hit the town. As he was running out of the building, his mobile rang. Glancing quickly at the screen, he saw that his wife was calling from Malacca, Car Nicobar. He cut off the call and ran outside; he would phone back later, he decided, once the tremors stopped.

He waited out the earthquake outside and when the ground was still at last, he hit the call button on his phone. There was no answer and he wondered if the network was down. But he had little time to think about the matter because a strange phenomenon had suddenly begun to **manifest** itself before him: the water in the harbor had begun to rise, very rapidly, and the anchored ships seemed to be swirling about in the grip of an unseen hand. Along with everyone else he ran to higher ground.

It was not long, however, before it occurred to the Director that the Nicobar Islands do not have the high elevations of their northern neighbors, the Andamans. They are low-lying islands for the most part, and some like Car Nicobar stand no more than a few meters above sea level at their highest point. Already anxious, the Director became frantic when word of the tsunami trickled down to the waterfront.

The Director knew of a government office in Car Nicobar that had a satellite phone. He dialed the number again and again: it was either busy or there was no answer. When at last he got through, the voice at the other end told him, with some reluctance, that Malacca had been badly hit. It was known that there were some survivors, but as for his family, there was no word.

The Director kept calling, and in the afternoon he learnt that his thirteen-year old son had been found clinging to the rafters of a church, some 200 meters behind their house. Arrangements were made to bring the boy to the phone and the Director was able to



surprise that many thick stands of coconut palms were still standing undisturbed. All trace of habitation, on the other hand, had been **obliterated**: the foundations of many buildings could be clearly seen, on the ground. But of the structures they had once supported, nothing remained. It was evident that the tsunami had been peculiarly selective in the manner of its destruction. The villages along the shore were not merely damaged; they were erased. It was as if the island had been hit by a weapon devised to cause the maximum possible damage to life and property, while leaving nature largely unharmed.

We came to the District Library: like the surrounding offices, it was unharmed, but a medical camp. Manned by the Indo-Tibetan Border Police, had sprung up on its grounds. The Director spotted a doctor, sitting in a tent. He **darted away** and slipped under the tent's blue flap. 'Doctor, have you heard anything about my family?' he said. 'I've come because I heard some survivors had been found...'

The doctor's face froze and after a moment's silence, in a tone that was noncommittal and yet not discouraging, he said: 'No news has reached me - I've not heard anything...'

We continued on our way, walking past the airy bungalows of the island's top officials, with their will-tended gardens. Everywhere, evidence of the tsunami's reach could be seen in pools of water that had turned rank over the last few days.

The Director hurried towards a spot where a mound of mangled household objects lay piled.

'Look, that's mine,' said the Director, pointing to a blue Aristocrat suitcase made of moulded plastic. The Director picked it up and shook it. 'I saw it the last time I was here,' he said. 'It was already empty. Everything had been looted.' His eyes moved over to a street trunk, lying nearby. 'That's mine too. Go and look.' Stepping over I saw that the trunk's lock had been forced open. On the side, written in large black letters, was the Director's name and designation.

'You see,' the Director said, as if in vindication. 'Everything I've been telling you is true. These things were all mine.'

A short distance away a wooden cabinet lay overturned. The Director beckoned to me. 'See – there are all the records from my office. Thirteen years of research: all gone.' I saw that the papers were **mimeographed** data sheets, with the letterhead of the Malaria Research Centre imprinted on top.

Suddenly his eyes lit up. 'Look,' he said, 'my slides...' a drawer had come open, shaking loose several decks of white-rimmed photographic slides. Most were sodden with water, but some were dry and had preserved their images. To my untrained eyes, the pictures appeared to be of bacteria, hugely magnified by the lens of a microscope. The Director sorted quickly through the slides and chose a dozen or so. Close at hand there lay a roll of unused plastic bags that had been washed out of a shop and dried by the sun. Peeling off one of these bags, he placed the slides carefully inside before fastening his fingers of them.

'Your home must have been nearby?' I said.

'No,' came the answer. 'The wave carried these things right out of the town. My house is still a kilometer away, over there.'

I had my first glimpse of the seafront where the town of Malacca had once stood. There were now only five structures still standing: the staring, skull-like shell of a school that had lost all its doors and windows; a neatly whitewashed bungalow; an arched gateway that had the words 'Rajiv Gandhi Memorial Park' painted on it; a small, miraculously unharmed Murugan temple, right beside the sea; and lastly the skeleton of a church, with a row of parallel arches rising from the rubble like the bleached ribs of a dead animal. This was the structure that had saved the life of the Director's son.

The Director led the way across the debris as if he were following a route imprinted in memory, a familiar map of streets and lanes. We came to a point where a rectangular platform of cement shone brightly under the sun. The Director Stepped up to it and placed his feet in the middle. 'This was my house, he said.' Only the foundation was concrete. The rest was wood. My wife used to teach English in a school here, but she always wanted to leave. I applied many times, but the transfer never came.' He paused, thinking back. For much of the time that we had been together, his voice had carried a note of sharp but undirected annoyance; now it softened. 'There was so much she could have achieved, he said. 'I was never able to give her the opportunity.'

I reached out to touch his arm but he shook my hand **brusquely** away; he was not the kind of man who takes kindly to expression of sympathy. I could tell from his **demeanor** that he was accustomed to adversity and had invented many rules for dealing with it. The emotion he felt for his family. He had never dreamt – and who could? – that one bright December day, soon after dawn, it would be stolen, unsavoured, by the sea.

He stopped to point to a yellow paint box, peeping out of the rubble. ‘That belonged to Vineeta, my daughter,’ he said, and the flatness of his voice was harder to listen to than an outburst would have been. ‘She loved to paint she was very good at it. She was even given prize, from Hyderabad.’

I had expected that he would stoop to pick up the box, but instead he turned away and walked on, gripping his bag of slides. ‘Wait!’ I cried. Don’t you want to take the box?’

‘No,’ he said vehemently, shaking his head. ‘What good will it do? What will it give back?’ He stopped to look at me over the rim of his glasses.

As a husband, a father, a human being, it was impossible not to wonder: what would I have done? What would I have felt? What would I have chosen to keep of the past? The truth is that nobody can know, except in the extremity of that moment, and then the choice is not a choice at all, but an expression of the innermost sovereignty of the self which decides because nothing now remains to cloud its vision. In the manner of his choosing, there was not a particle of hesitation, not the faintest glimmer of a doubt. Was it perhaps that in this moment of utter **desolation** there was some comfort in the knowledge of an impersonal effort?

There are times when words seem futile, and to no one more so than a writer. At these moments it seems that nothing is a value of other than to act and to intervene in the course of events: to think, to reflect, to write seem trivial and wasteful. But the life of the mind takes many forms and after the day had passed I understood that in the manner of his choosing, the Director had passed I understood that in the manner of his choosing, the Director had mounted the most singular, the most powerful defence of it that I would ever witness.

Amitav Ghosh (b. 1956), acclaimed novelist, journalist, anthropologist and professor, is among the most important Indian writers in English today. Ghosh attended school in India and England, conducted field work in Tunisia and Egypt, and currently lives in New York City. In his works he attempts to express the silenced voices of those not represented in history. An extremely versatile author, his body of work includes novels like “The Circle of Reason, The Shadow Lines, The Glass Palace and most recently The Hungry Tide. Ghosh’s works of non-fiction include The Imam and the Indian, In an Antique Land, Dancing in Cambodia and Countdown.”

GLOSSARY

Director	:	Director of the Malaria Research Centre in Car Nicobar island
Malacca	:	The seafront township in Car Nicobar
Manifest	:	To show clearly, especially a feeling or attitude
Rafters	:	The sloping pieces of wood that support of roof
Flailing	:	moving without control
Canopy	:	the branches and leaves that spread out at the top of a group of trees forming a kind of roof
Obliterate	:	to remove all signs of something
Darted away	:	moved quickly or suddenly
Brusquely		in a quick and rude manner
Demeanor		a way of looking and behaving
Desolation		the feeling of being very lonely and unhappy

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. On the morning of 26 December, the Director's wife rang him up. But he did not speak to her. Why? In the light of the subsequent events do you think he made a mistake? Would it have made matters different if he had talked to her?
2. Why did the tsunami waves cause more damage in Nicobar than in the Andamans?
3. Do you agree with the Director that his son was a brave boy? How did he manage to save himself? Why was he afraid to talk to his father?
4. In what way was the tsunami selective in its destruction?
5. What items that belonged to the Director did they find among the runins? Did he try to retrieve them? How do you account for his behaviour?
6. There was so much she could have achieved. But I was not able to give her the opportunity,' said the Director about his wife. What did he mean by these words?
7. Discarding all the things that could have served as mementoes, the Director chooses to keep a set of slides. How does Amitav Ghosh try to explain this peculiar action?
Can you find an explanation for this seemingly strange action?
8. In what way does the personal tragedy of the Director represent the destruction caused by the tsunami?
9. Amitav Ghosh met the Director at Port Blair and got to know him. But he calls him 'the Director,' and does not use his name at all. Why do you think he does so?

Appendix E

Questionnaire

The aim of this questionnaire is to understand tertiary level students' perception and attitude towards the use of literature in language classroom. Your answers will be very valuable and useful in the selection of materials to develop and redesign rich language pedagogy. Please answer sincerely and frankly. The data of this questionnaire will be used for research only and will be kept **CONFIDENTIAL**. Information identifying the respondent will not be disclosed under any circumstances.

SECTION ONE

1. As a language learner why do you read English materials? (Please put tick marks in the boxes. You can tick more than one choice)

- ☐ To collect information
- ☐ To respond to classroom activity
- ☐ For pleasure and enjoyments
- ☐ To pass the course

2. In your S.S.C/H.S.C. , have you ever studied literary texts (poetry, short stories, extracts from novel, drama) as a resource/material in the language classroom?

☐ YES ☐ NO

If YES, then do 2.1 and 2.2

If NO, then go to 3.

2.1 Please specify what type of literature was used.

2.2 Did you enjoy reading literary text? ☐ YES ☐ NO

3. Do you have a habit of reading fiction in English? (Short story, novel, poem etc.)

☐ YES ☐ NO

4. To you reading literary text is (Tick your choice)

1. Interesting
2. Boring
3. Useless
4. Challenging
5. Thought-provoking
6. Not Sure

5. If you were asked to select a literary piece to be used in your English class, which type of text would you prefer? (You can tick more than one. In that case please rank according to your priority)

- A. Novel
- B. Short story
- C. Poem
- D. Drama

6. Why would you choose that particular genre?

Section Two

7. Following are some of the benefits of using literature as a resource in language classrooms. Based on your experience of reading a short story in a recent class please indicate your opinion by circling the most appropriate response indicated by the numbers 1 to 3. Circle only one response.

1 = Agree 2= neutral 3= disagree

ITEMS		Agree	Neutral	Disagree
1.	Grammar items can be learnt through literature.	1	2	3
2.	Vocabulary can be increased through literature.	1	2	3
3.	The actual use of language can be learnt through literature.	1	2	3
4.	Creativity can be promoted through literature. (Creative writing based on the story)	1	2	3
5.	Common expressions used in everyday life can be learned through literature	1	2	3
6.	Literary texts are more motivating than non-fiction.	1	2	3

7.	Reading proficiency can be developed.	1	2	3
8.	Knowledge about others' culture can be expanded.	1	2	3
9.	Learners become more imaginative.	1	2	3
10.	Learners can relate their own world of experience with the text.	1	2	3

8. Did you find the language of the short story more difficult than the other non-literary texts like newspaper articles, essays that you have done in this module?

☐ Yes ☐ No

9. What are some of the difficulties you have faced while reading the story in the recent English class? Please list from your experience

a.....b.....c.....

10. While reading the story in your English class on which aspect did you focus most? (Tick)

- a. Understanding the overall meaning
- b. Understanding the language use.
- c. Understanding the word meaning

11. Please compare the other types of material used in your English class with short story. Circle ONE of the three numbers to indicate your best choice for each item below.

1 = Newspaper article, 2= Essays, 3= Short story

Comparison among different types of reading materials used in the class.

ITEMS		Newspaper article	Essays.	Short Stories
A	From which type of material could you learn the most vocabulary? Why? (Explain in the given space below). _____ _____.	1	2	3

B	Which one do you think would be most effective to learn grammar points? (Explain in the given space below). _____	1	2	3
C	Which type of material was the most useful to improve your reading skill?	1	2	3
D	Which type of material allowed you to go beyond the reading passage?	1	2	3
E	Which type of reading material was the most motivating to read?	1	2	3
F	Which type of material helped you to visualize the situation more?	1	2	3
G	With which text were you completely absorbed emotionally?	1	2	3

12. Give your response/opinion on lesson of using literature in the language classroom.

Thanks!!!!

Appendix F Interview Schedule

Student's perception on use of literary texts in language classroom.

1. Did you like to read the short story in your language class titled: The Town by the Sea? Why?
2. From your experience of reading short story which activity did you enjoy most? Why?
3. Do you think literary texts are very different from non- literary texts?How?
4. Which type of reading materials used in your class have you found more motivating to read? Why?
5. Which type of materials like- newspaper article, essays, and short stories do you prefer to improve your reading skill? Why?
6. What language skills can be learnt best through reading short stories?

Appendix G- Full transcription of the individual students' interview

The names of the students are kept anonymous. In the transcription the following abbreviations are used:

Researcher = R

Student = S

Interview 1

R: Hello! Please take a seat.

S1: Thanks

R: I'm going to ask you few questions based on the recent lesson that you have done in your English class.

S1: Ok, I understand, madam.

(1) R: Did you like to read the short story in your language class titled: *The Town by the Sea*? Why?

S1: Yes, of course! It was interesting.

(2) R: From your experience of reading short story what did you enjoy most? Why?

S1: When I was reading, I recalled the scene that I had watched on TV 4 years back and tried to match the scene. The whole scene was very pathetic. I tried to match the actual scene with the story, as it was a real life account. We described the character of the story. There we had a debate on whether the director was a rude person vs emotionless person.

(3) R: Do you think literary texts are very different from non- literary texts?

S1: Yes, absolutely. When I read a story I can visualize the scene. In a story, it has situation, turning point, we can predict what will happen next, which I don't find in essays.

(4) R: Which one have you found more motivating to read? Why?

S1: I found short story more interesting. I could feel the emotion of the character.

(5) R: Which type of materials like- newspaper article, essays, and short stories do you prefer to improve your reading skill? Why?

S1: I think short story will help me to improve my reading skill, because it is comparatively long and I need to read it carefully to understand the context. Sometimes, meaning is not very clear to me. It has underlying meaning.

(6) R: What language skills can be learnt best through reading short stories?

S1: I think our speaking skill developed a lot as we discussed about the story in group. It was really effective when we shared our thoughts. Writing skill can be developed as well. We changed the ending of the story which I liked most. Here

we had more freedom to express ourselves. I learnt a lot of vocabulary from the story which was very effective.

Interview 2

R: Hello! Please take a seat.

S2: Thanks

R: I'm going to ask you few questions based on the recent lesson that you have done in your English class.

S1: Yah ! Sure.

(1) R: Did you like to read the short story titled: *The Town by the Sea*? Why?

S2: Yes, but at point I felt bored. There were too many unknown words. In fact the story was sad.

(2) R: From your experience of reading short story what did you enjoy most? Why?

S2: When our teacher told us to describe the main character of the story they we had an argument in the class. I told that, the Director was an emotionless person but other group did not agree with that. But I was firm on my comment. I liked the discussion part of the story.

(3) R: Do you think literary texts are very different from non- literary texts?

S2: Yes, in short story the language is different. It was a real life story, but in other reading materials we get the facts or others things. In a compare contrast paragraph, the writer gives his or her point of view and nothing much to think .

(4) R: Which one have you found more motivating to read? Why?

S2: Short story. We can understand how a person can be so different what we perceive. The characters are the writer's creation. They create different personality.

(5) R: Which type of materials like- newspaper article, essays, and short stories do you prefer to improve your reading skill? Why?

S2: I like to read newspaper to improve my reading skill as it doesn't take much time to understand and it gives me latest information.

(6) R: What language skills can be learnt best through reading short stories?

S2: Firstly, vocabulary. We guessed the meaning from the text. Then again I found it difficult. Then I looked into the glossary at the back of the text. Another thing is that, to understand the whole text I need to think a lot. That's why I need to read a lot. Umm.....yes, reading can be improved.

Interview: 3:

R: Hello! Please take a seat.

S3: Thanks

- (1) R: Did you like to read the short story titled: *The Town by the Sea*? Why?
S4: Yes, of course! Though at times I found it boring but at the end it was really amazing. I touched my heart.
- (2) R: From your experience of reading short story what did you enjoy most? Why?
S4: I could comment on writers actions whether he was right or wrong, or , how an action of the main character of the story could change the whole story, etc....here I shared ny opinion with my teacher and group members. We changed the ending of the story and made up our own story in a group and I liked that activity most.
- (3) R: Do you think literary texts are very different from non- literary texts?
S4: Yes , they are. When we get any reading comprehension those are not very long...but here short story is a bit lengthy and it take much time to understand the main idea of the story.
- (4) R: Which one have you found more motivating? Why?
S4: I found short story more interesting, as there is no right and wrong answer. I can say from my point of view. We don't get that chance in materials.
- (5) R: Which type of materials like- newspaper article, essays, and short stories do you prefer to improve your reading skill? Why?
S4: I thing short stories will be most effective to improve my reading skill. I know I have a poor reading skill and I don't understand what the writer meansits not always clear to me. That why I will choose more short stories to read.
- (6) R: What language skills can be learnt best through reading short stories?
S4: Obviously, reading skill because when we read we need to pay full concentration to understand the story.

Interview: 5

R: Hello! Please take a seat.

S5: Thanks

R: I'm going to ask you few questions based on the recent lesson that you have done in your English class.

S1: No problem , madam.

- (1) R: Did you like to read the short story titled: *The Town by the Sea*? Why?
S5: Yes, because, it was very emotional and I could feel the unsaid pain of the Director.
- (2) R: From your experience of reading short story what did you enjoy most? Why?

S5: I liked the twist of the story. Most interesting thing is that, we can relate our life with the characters. It allowed me to imagine what else could happen at that time and what would be my action

(3) R: Do you think literary texts are very different from non- literary texts? Elaborate:

S5: Yes, short story is the story of the people , something happening in their life, it has a complete though. Here I found that writer did not always follow any strict grammar rule...which is common in our life as well.

(4) R: Which one have you found more motivating to read? Why?

S5: Of course, short storyit is very much related with our normal life. We can feel that we are the character of the story. With formal writing we don't feel any kind of attachment.

(5) R: Which type of materials like- newspaper article, essays, and short stories do you prefer to improve your reading skill? Why?

S5: I will prefer short story to read. If it s interesting to read then only I will read it otherwise its really difficult to read in English. Newspaper articles are boring to read, it has nothing interesting.....accept entertainment section. Its very formal.

(6) R: What language skills can be learnt best through reading short stories?

S5: Obviously we can develop our reading skill. I didn't read short story much. But when I read it I found it very useful.

Interview: 6

R: Hello! Please take a seat.

S6: Thanks

R: I'm going to ask you few questions based on the recent lesson that you have done in your English class.

S1: Alright, madam.

(1) R: Did you like to read the short story in your language class titled: *The Town by the Sea*? Why?

S6: Yes, it was easy to understand. The theme was interesting and I liked it.

(2) R: From your experience of reading short story what did you enjoy most? Why?

S6: I enjoyed most when I imagined myself at that situation and I found it interesting. At that time I had a world of my own where I could think of anything.

(3) R: Do you think literary texts are very different from non- literary texts?

S6: Yes, absolutely. I read newspaper article and other articles which provide information, which is sometimes boring to read. From short story or novel we can get information at the same time it conveys social message which is important to develop our thinking skill.

(4) R: Which one have you found more motivating? Why?

S6: Definitely short stories that we read in our class. It had a plot, a setting and a climax as well which I liked most.

(5) R: Which type of materials like- newspaper article, essays, and short stories do you prefer to improve your reading skill? Why?

S6: I think all of them are helpful. So far to improve reading I've read essays which were difficult for me to understand. That's why I don't like to read essay. I read newspaper a lot which is easy to understand. I'm not sure about short stories as I don't have much experience of reading it in English.

(6) R: What language skills can be learnt best through reading short stories?

S6: Ok, if I think in terms of skills then reading skill can be improved, Speaking skill can also be developed through class discussion that we did. In story real life expressions are used that we can use in our speech. I've tried to use some expressions that I've learnt from the story. My writing skill can also be developed as we did one writing task based on this story. I'm not sure about the vocabulary as I can't guess the meaning from the context. Most of the time I am wrong. I have to look up the word in the dictionary.

Interview: 7

R: Hello! Please take a seat.

S7: Thanks

R: I'm going to ask you few questions based on the recent lesson that you have done in your English class.

S1: Ok, madam.

(1) R: Did you like to read the short story in your language class titled: *The Town by the Sea*? Why?

S7: Yes, I liked to read it. It has a different dimension, different point of view. The surrounding of the story gives an idea of the leaving style of the characters.

(2)R: From your experience of reading short story what did you enjoy most? Why?

S7:

(3)R: Do you think literary texts are very different from non- literary texts?

S7: Yes, they are different, articles are more formal whereas, short stories are very informal, it's the story of people which is more amusing to read. For example- News articles have similar type of heading and its always same just information.....i don't like to read that. Essays are also same. Sometimes it's too difficult to understand.

(4)R: Which one have you found more motivating? Why?

S7: I found short stories more motivating as it speaks for us. Sometimes our inner self comes out. it inspired me to take part in class discussion which I rarely do.

(5)R: Which type of materials like- newspaper article, essays, and short stories do you prefer to improve your reading skill? Why?

S7: I will prefer short story as I find it interesting to read. If I don't get any interest in reading then I won't read further which is common in news paper reading. Most important fact is that, I rarely read. In that sense it all the same.

(6)R: What language skills can be learnt best through reading short stories?

S7: I think reading and writing can be developed the most and vocabulary at the same. To understand the story completely, I need to think what the writing is trying to say...that is not said clearly, as a reader we have to find out what the writers are trying to say.

Interview: 8

R: Hello! Please take a seat.

S8: Thanks

R: I'm going to ask you few questions based on the recent lesson that you have done in your English class.

S1: Ok, I understand, madam.

(1) R: Did you like to read the short story in your language class titled: *The Town by the Sea*? Why?

S8: No, it was too difficult for me to understand. I found too many unknown words and after I while I lost my patient.

(2) R: From your experience of reading short story what did you enjoy most? Why?

S8: As I didn't understand the overall meaning, I didn't enjoy the lesson. But when the teacher explained the theme of the story then I liked the theme.

(3) R: Do you think literary texts are very different from non-literary texts?

S8: In a way it's different....in short stories we find many difficult words that are not present in the news article as the common people are the target audience. They use easy language so that everybody can understand. Similarly, in essay it follows certain structure. But short story doesn't follow any structure. It's writer's creation.

(4) R: Which one have you found more motivating? Why?

S8: To me news articles were more motivating to me as the topic was on recent times, it was informative and I knew about the topic I could express my opinion in the class.

(5) R: Which type of materials like- newspaper article, essays, and short stories do you prefer to improve your reading skill? Why?

S8: I think newspaper will help me to improve my reading as it's easy to read and it does not have too many difficult words and at the same time I will be updated about the recent news.

(6) R: What language skills can be learnt best through reading short stories?

S8: writing may be...I'm not sure about it.

Interview: 9

R: Hello! Please take a seat.

S9: Thanks

R: I'm going to ask you few questions based on the recent lesson that you have done in your English class.

S1: Alright, madam.

(1) R: Did you like to read the short story in your language class titled: *The Town by the Sea*? Why?

S9: I liked it but not that much as initially I didn't understand the description. When my teacher explained me only then I found it interesting. Then again things are not very clear to me. Too many difficult words and it was a long story. Moreover it was a sad one which I don't like to read.

(2) R: From your experience of reading short story what did you enjoy most? Why?

S9: There was nothing to enjoy as it was a sad story and the activities were not very interesting.

(3) R: Do you think literary texts are very different from non-literary texts?

S9: Yah!! Absolutely...structure wise they are different. Non-Literary texts use refined language with proper structure and the meaning is pretty clear. But in literary texts writers use symbolic language which is difficult for me to understand as I'm not very good in English.

(4) R: Which one have you found more motivating? Why?

S9: I found non-literary text more motivating to read as I can respond in other class as well as it contains information. It helps me develop my academic reading.

(5) R: Which type of materials like- newspaper article, essays, and short stories do you prefer to improve your reading skill? Why?

S9: Obviously I'll prefer essays as these are short and it will serve two purposes, I will improve my reading at the same time I'll learn how to structure an academic writing.

(6) R: What language skills can be learnt best through reading short stories?

S9: Reading can be developed. But to me it will help me to develop my creative thinking though I haven't tried it. In that case it has to be very interesting reading not like the one we did in the class. It was a bit boring.

Interview: 10

R: Hello! Please take a seat.

S10: Thanks

R: I'm going to ask you few questions based on the recent lesson that you have done in your English class.

S1: No problem, madam..

(1) R: Did you like to read the short story in your language class titled: *The Town by the Sea*? Why?

S10: As the story was interesting I could not stop reading the story though it was a homework to finish reading the rest of the story before coming into the class.

(2) R: From your experience of reading short story what did you enjoy most? Why?

S10: I enjoyed the debate where all my classmates were divided on one question asked by our teacher.

(3) R: Do you think literary texts are very different from non-literary texts?

S10: In stories grammar is not always followed which is followed in a formal writing like essay, news paper. don't follow the structure properly as in our real life we don't always say something structure wise.

(4) R: Which one have you found more motivating? Why?

S10: There is an emotional attachment with the reader and the text that prompts me to participate in the class.

(5) R: Which type of materials like- newspaper article, essays, and short stories do you prefer to improve your reading skill? Why?

S10: Definitely short stories as I feel connected with the text.

(6) R: What language skills can be learnt best through reading short stories?

S10: Vocabulary, in news paper, writers uses common words but story writers use different words to express different situation.